

1800.0 - Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey, 2017

Latest ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 15/11/2017 First Issue

Summary

Results

NATIONAL RESULTS

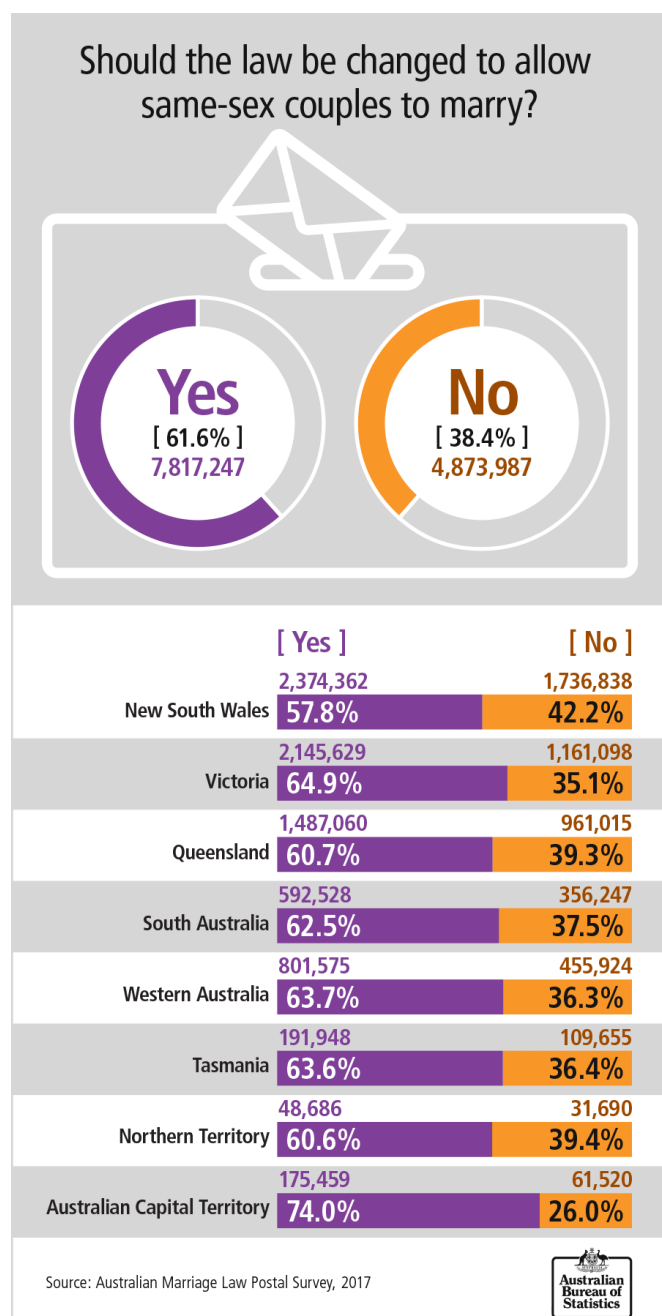
Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 7,817,247 (61.6%) responding Yes and 4,873,987 (38.4%) responding No. Nearly 8 out of 10 eligible Australians (79.5%) expressed their view.

All states and territories recorded a majority Yes response. 133 of the 150 Federal Electoral Divisions recorded a majority Yes response, and 17 of the 150 Federal Electoral Divisions recorded a majority No response.

Further information on response and participation within each state and territory is available through the menu.



State/Territory	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
New South Wales	2,374,362	57.8	1,736,838	42.2	4,111,200	100
Victoria	2,145,629	64.9	1,161,098	35.1	3,306,727	100
Queensland	1,487,060	60.7	961,015	39.3	2,448,075	100
South Australia	592,528	62.5	356,247	37.5	948,775	100
Western Australia	801,575	63.7	455,924	36.3	1,257,499	100
Tasmania	191,948	63.6	109,655	36.4	301,603	100
Northern Territory(a)	48,686	60.6	31,690	39.4	80,376	100
Australian Capital Territory(b)	175,459	74.0	61,520	26.0	236,979	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) Includes Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (within the Division of Lingiari).

(b) Includes Jervis Bay (within the Division of Fenner) and Norfolk Island (within the Division of Canberra).

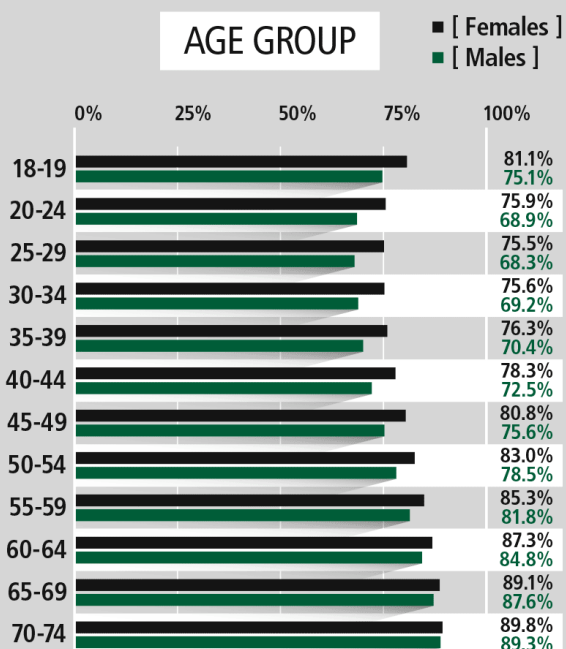
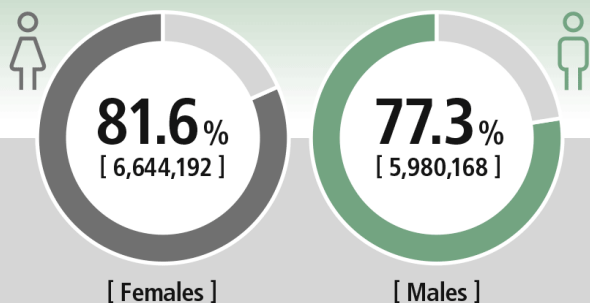
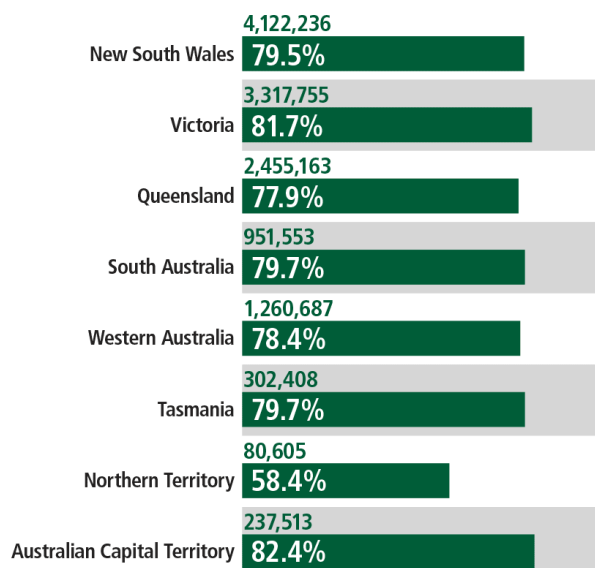
Participation

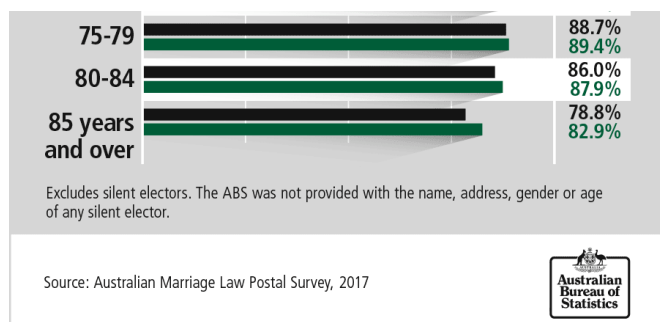
12,727,920 (79.5%) eligible Australians participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to participate than males. Nationally, 81.6% (6,644,192) of eligible females and 77.3% (5,980,168) of eligible males participated in the survey.

Those aged 70 to 74 were the most likely to respond to the survey, with 89.6% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 25 to 29 at 71.9%. The youngest age group of eligible Australians (those aged 18-19 years) were more likely (78.2%) to participate than any other age group under the age of 45 years.

Overall participation





State/Territory	Eligible participants		Non-responding		Total	
	Total responding(a)					
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
New South Wales	4,122,236	79.5	1,065,445	20.5	5,187,681	100
Victoria	3,317,755	81.7	743,634	18.3	4,061,389	100
Queensland	2,455,163	77.9	695,710	22.1	3,150,873	100
South Australia	951,553	79.7	242,027	20.3	1,193,580	100
Western Australia	1,260,687	78.4	346,333	21.6	1,607,020	100
Tasmania	302,408	79.7	77,020	20.3	379,428	100
Northern Territory(b)	80,605	58.4	57,496	41.6	138,101	100
Australian Capital Territory(c)	237,513	82.4	50,595	17.6	288,108	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

(b) Includes Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (within the Division of Lingiari).

(c) Includes Jervis Bay (within the Division of Fenner) and Norfolk Island (within the Division of Canberra).

New South Wales

RESULTS FOR NEW SOUTH WALES

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of eligible Australians in New South Wales (NSW) who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 2,374,362 (57.8%) responding Yes and 1,736,838 (42.2%) responding No. Nearly 8 out of every 10 Australians in NSW (79.5%) expressed their view.

Response by Federal Electoral Divisions within New South Wales(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Banks	37,736	44.9	46,343	55.1	84,079	100
Barton	37,153	43.6	47,984	56.4	85,137	100
Bennelong	42,943	49.8	43,215	50.2	86,158	100
Berowra	48,471	54.6	40,369	45.4	88,840	100
Blaxland	20,406	26.1	57,926	73.9	78,332	100
Bradfield	53,681	60.6	34,927	39.4	88,608	100
Calare	54,091	60.2	35,779	39.8	89,870	100
Chifley	32,871	41.3	46,702	58.7	79,573	100
Cook	47,505	55.0	38,804	45.0	86,309	100
Cowper	57,493	60.0	38,317	40.0	95,810	100
Cunningham	60,906	65.7	31,840	34.3	92,746	100
Dobell	59,475	65.7	30,987	34.3	90,462	100
Eden-Monaro	57,223	64.9	30,926	35.1	88,149	100
Farrer	48,432	55.2	39,297	44.8	87,729	100
Fowler	27,847	36.3	48,782	63.7	76,629	100
Gilmore	59,322	62.0	36,386	38.0	95,708	100
Grayndler	73,208	79.9	18,429	20.1	91,637	100
Greenway	38,016	46.4	43,980	53.6	81,996	100
Hughes	51,337	58.4	36,558	41.6	87,895	100
Hume	51,284	58.6	36,271	41.4	87,555	100
Hunter	59,137	64.4	32,723	35.6	91,860	100
Kingsford Smith	56,297	64.1	31,510	35.9	87,807	100
Lindsay	49,071	56.2	38,295	43.8	87,366	100
Lyne	51,416	55.3	41,539	44.7	92,955	100
Macarthur	43,323	52.1	39,907	47.9	83,230	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Mackellar	62,350	68.0	29,330	32.0	91,680	100
Macquarie	56,180	63.9	31,778	36.1	87,958	100
McMahon	29,146	35.1	53,967	64.9	83,113	100
Mitchell	42,112	49.1	43,652	50.9	85,764	100
Newcastle	71,158	74.8	23,999	25.2	95,157	100
New England	44,608	52.5	40,324	47.5	84,932	100
North Sydney	64,813	71.8	25,473	28.2	90,286	100
Page	55,943	59.7	37,727	40.3	93,670	100
Parkes	41,408	52.7	37,108	47.3	78,516	100
Parramatta	29,299	38.4	47,038	61.6	76,337	100
Paterson	60,915	65.5	32,059	34.5	92,974	100
Reid	43,567	52.7	39,061	47.3	82,628	100
Richmond	62,591	67.9	29,625	32.1	92,216	100
Riverina	47,333	54.6	39,308	45.4	86,641	100
Robertson	58,689	65.7	30,614	34.3	89,303	100
Shortland	62,455	67.7	29,836	32.3	92,291	100
Sydney	76,144	83.7	14,860	16.3	91,004	100
Warringah	64,999	75.0	21,660	25.0	86,659	100
Watson	24,915	30.4	57,160	69.6	82,075	100
Wentworth	69,279	80.8	16,410	19.2	85,689	100
Werriwa	30,252	36.3	53,174	63.7	83,426	100
Whitlam	57,562	62.3	34,879	37.7	92,441	100
New South Wales (Total)	2,374,362	57.8	1,736,838	42.2	4,111,200	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Participation

4,122,236 (79.5%) eligible Australians in NSW participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In NSW, 81.3% (2,147,973) of eligible females and 77.5% (1,947,546) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In NSW, those aged 70 to 74 were the most likely to respond to the survey with 89.8% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 30 to 34 at 72.1%.

Participation by Federal Electoral Divisions within New South Wales(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Banks	84,326	80.1	20,928	19.9	105,254	100
Barton	85,363	78.0	24,008	22.0	109,371	100
Bennelong	86,402	81.2	19,973	18.8	106,375	100
Berowra	89,052	84.7	16,038	15.3	105,090	100
Blaxland	78,552	75.2	25,883	24.8	104,435	100
Bradfield	88,810	83.7	17,261	16.3	106,071	100
Calare	90,155	78.1	25,342	21.9	115,497	100
Chifley	79,836	73.9	28,180	26.1	108,016	100
Cook	86,538	82.2	18,713	17.8	105,251	100
Cowper	96,125	79.2	25,197	20.8	121,322	100
Cunningham	93,014	81.9	20,607	18.1	113,621	100
Dobell	90,717	78.9	24,275	21.1	114,992	100
Eden-Monaro	88,398	80.0	22,139	20.0	110,537	100
Farrer	88,006	77.4	25,669	22.6	113,675	100
Fowler	76,857	72.4	29,251	27.6	106,108	100
Gilmore	96,011	80.6	23,109	19.4	119,120	100
Grayndler	91,773	85.1	16,074	14.9	107,847	100
Greenway	82,213	76.5	25,253	23.5	107,466	100
Hughes	88,080	83.8	17,038	16.2	105,118	100
Hume	87,768	78.9	23,457	21.1	111,225	100
Hunter	92,111	78.5	25,253	21.5	117,364	100
Kingsford Smith	88,032	79.7	22,399	20.3	110,431	100
Lindsay	87,600	76.5	26,955	23.5	114,555	100
Lyne	93,271	81.3	21,426	18.7	114,697	100
Macarthur	83,458	75.4	27,271	24.6	110,729	100
Mackellar	91,888	84.0	17,500	16.0	109,388	100
Macquarie	88,193	82.7	18,490	17.3	106,683	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
McMahon	83,355	77.8	23,721	22.2	107,076	100
Mitchell	85,940	81.6	19,436	18.4	105,376	100
Newcastle	95,389	82.7	19,970	17.3	115,359	100
New England	85,188	76.9	25,581	23.1	110,769	100
North Sydney	90,479	83.8	17,538	16.2	108,017	100
Page	93,961	78.6	25,645	21.4	119,606	100
Parkes	78,757	72.6	29,777	27.4	108,534	100
Parramatta	76,534	74.8	25,757	25.2	102,291	100
Paterson	93,253	79.4	24,264	20.6	117,517	100
Reid	82,831	77.7	23,786	22.3	106,617	100
Richmond	92,490	80.3	22,719	19.7	115,209	100
Riverina	86,906	77.2	25,632	22.8	112,538	100
Robertson	89,534	81.4	20,431	18.6	109,965	100
Shortland	92,546	82.5	19,675	17.5	112,221	100
Sydney	91,150	80.5	22,093	19.5	113,243	100
Warringah	86,831	83.9	16,630	16.1	103,461	100
Watson	82,280	77.0	24,634	23.0	106,914	100
Wentworth	85,851	82.6	18,121	17.4	103,972	100
Werriva	83,695	74.1	29,282	25.9	112,977	100
Whitlam	92,717	80.1	23,064	19.9	115,781	100
New South Wales (Total)	4,122,236	79.5	1,065,445	20.5	5,187,681	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

For more detailed information on response and participation, download the results spreadsheets from the Downloads.

To find out more about the characteristics of New South Wales electoral divisions see Quickstats.

Please note that the Quickstats boundaries are based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) not the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Division boundaries. For further information please see Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 3 - Non ABS Structures, July 2017 (cat. no. 1270.0.55.003)

Victoria

RESULTS FOR VICTORIA

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians in Victoria who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 2,145,629 (64.9%) responding Yes and 1,161,098 (35.1%) responding No. More than 8 out of 10 eligible Australians in Victoria (81.7%) expressed their view.

Response for Federal Electoral Divisions within Victoria(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Aston	48,455	62.0	29,730	38.0	78,185	100
Ballarat	65,613	70.5	27,405	29.5	93,018	100
Batman	66,383	71.2	26,906	28.8	93,289	100
Bendigo	63,412	68.7	28,852	31.3	92,264	100
Bruce	34,644	46.9	39,203	53.1	73,847	100
Calwell	37,839	43.2	49,823	56.8	87,662	100
Casey	59,959	68.1	28,144	31.9	88,103	100
Chisholm	49,448	61.6	30,844	38.4	80,292	100
Corangamite	69,723	71.6	27,708	28.4	97,431	100
Corio	62,658	67.7	29,865	32.3	92,523	100
Deakin	55,464	65.7	28,973	34.3	84,437	100
Dunkley	62,840	72.0	24,471	28.0	87,311	100
Flinders	68,291	70.0	29,275	30.0	97,566	100
Gellibrand	62,045	68.1	29,065	31.9	91,110	100
Gippsland	51,196	60.2	33,910	39.8	85,106	100
Goldstein	69,726	76.3	21,663	23.7	91,389	100
Gorton	49,834	53.3	43,587	46.7	93,421	100
Higgins	70,059	78.3	19,375	21.7	89,434	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Holt	47,147	50.7	45,875	49.3	93,022	100
Hotham	47,986	59.6	32,524	40.4	80,510	100
Indi	54,563	63.1	31,925	36.9	86,488	100
Isaacs	56,645	65.3	30,063	34.7	86,708	100
Jagajaga	65,098	73.5	23,453	26.5	88,551	100
Kooyong	63,592	73.7	22,729	26.3	86,321	100
Lalor	57,062	56.8	43,429	43.2	100,491	100
La Trobe	61,807	67.5	29,826	32.5	91,633	100
Mallee	42,495	54.3	35,795	45.7	78,290	100
Maribyrnong	53,208	59.9	35,658	40.1	88,866	100
McEwen	73,705	65.4	39,007	34.6	112,712	100
McMillan	61,479	62.7	36,500	37.3	97,979	100
Melbourne	81,287	83.7	15,839	16.3	97,126	100
Melbourne Ports	70,589	82.0	15,523	18.0	86,112	100
Menzies	47,137	57.0	35,626	43.0	82,763	100
Murray	48,205	57.6	35,452	42.4	83,657	100
Scullin	48,245	53.4	42,147	46.6	90,392	100
Wannon	49,340	61.0	31,529	39.0	80,869	100
Wills	68,450	70.0	29,399	30.0	97,849	100
Victoria (Total)	2,145,629	64.9	1,161,098	35.1	3,306,727	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Participation

3,317,755 (81.7%) eligible Australians in Victoria participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In Victoria, 83.6% (1,736,595) of eligible females and 79.6% (1,554,205) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In Victoria, those aged 70 to 74 were the most likely to respond to the survey with 89.3% of eligible electors in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 30 to 34 at 75.9%.

Participation for Federal Electoral Divisions within Victoria(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Aston	78,419	81.6	17,664	18.4	96,083	100
Ballarat	93,351	81.7	20,923	18.3	114,274	100
Batman	93,576	83.9	17,901	16.1	111,477	100
Bendigo	92,597	82.7	19,360	17.3	111,957	100
Bruce	74,104	77.7	21,261	22.3	95,365	100
Calwell	87,993	78.9	23,588	21.1	111,581	100
Casey	88,419	84.0	16,807	16.0	105,226	100
Chisholm	80,563	82.4	17,188	17.6	97,751	100
Corangamite	97,757	85.1	17,123	14.9	114,880	100
Corio	92,882	83.6	18,255	16.4	111,137	100
Deakin	84,713	84.6	15,389	15.4	100,102	100
Dunkley	87,596	81.9	19,322	18.1	106,918	100
Flinders	97,902	82.1	21,407	17.9	119,309	100
Gellibrand	91,388	82.2	19,771	17.8	111,159	100
Gippsland	85,444	80.7	20,370	19.3	105,814	100
Goldstein	91,627	86.0	14,857	14.0	106,484	100
Gorton	93,768	77.3	27,479	22.7	121,247	100
Higgins	89,614	84.4	16,615	15.6	106,229	100
Holt	93,311	76.8	28,260	23.2	121,571	100
Hotham	80,813	80.4	19,732	19.6	100,545	100
Indi	86,812	82.1	18,934	17.9	105,746	100
Isaacs	86,983	80.8	20,692	19.2	107,675	100
Jagajaga	88,806	85.3	15,363	14.7	104,169	100
Kooyong	86,552	86.0	14,147	14.0	100,699	100
Lalor	100,836	77.0	30,127	23.0	130,963	100
La Trobe	91,901	82.9	19,002	17.1	110,903	100
Mallee	78,649	78.8	21,207	21.2	99,856	100
Maribyrnong	89,226	79.0	23,762	21.0	112,988	100
McEwen	113,089	80.7	26,966	19.3	140,055	100
McMillan	98,351	81.4	22,403	18.6	120,754	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Melbourne	97,308	82.8	20,154	17.2	117,462	100
Melbourne Ports	86,310	82.2	18,745	17.8	105,055	100
Menzies	83,021	84.1	15,745	15.9	98,766	100
Murray	84,014	79.6	21,560	20.4	105,574	100
Scullin	90,749	79.9	22,817	20.1	113,566	100
Wannon	81,212	81.4	18,569	18.6	99,781	100
Wills	98,099	82.9	20,169	17.1	118,268	100
Victoria (Total)	3,317,755	81.7	743,634	18.3	4,061,389	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

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Queensland

RESULTS FOR QUEENSLAND

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians in Queensland who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 1,487,060 (60.7%) responding Yes and 961,015 (39.3%) responding No. Nearly 8 out of 10 eligible Australians in Queensland (77.9%) expressed their view.

Response for Federal Electoral Divisions within Queensland(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Blair	47,194	60.0	31,433	40.0	78,627	100
Bonner	52,139	62.0	31,891	38.0	84,030	100
Bowman	53,529	62.1	32,627	37.9	86,156	100
Brisbane	72,812	79.5	18,762	20.5	91,574	100
Capricornia	39,917	54.1	33,917	45.9	73,834	100
Dawson	42,539	55.1	34,599	44.9	77,138	100
Dickson	54,206	65.2	28,988	34.8	83,194	100
Fadden	52,154	61.8	32,218	38.2	84,372	100
Fairfax	58,510	64.3	32,451	35.7	90,961	100
Fisher	52,023	62.8	30,783	37.2	82,806	100
Flynn	39,020	51.5	36,783	48.5	75,803	100
Forde	46,937	60.5	30,585	39.5	77,522	100
Griffith	69,171	76.6	21,132	23.4	90,303	100
Groom	40,536	49.2	41,915	50.8	82,451	100
Herbert	48,110	62.8	28,441	37.2	76,551	100
Hinkler	40,649	50.7	39,548	49.3	80,197	100
Kennedy	33,160	46.7	37,784	53.3	70,944	100
Leichhardt	47,750	63.4	27,606	36.6	75,356	100
Lilley	59,991	67.7	28,671	32.3	88,662	100
Longman	51,268	60.4	33,576	39.6	84,844	100
Maranoa	35,475	43.9	45,308	56.1	80,783	100
McPherson	54,034	65.5	28,486	34.5	82,520	100
Moncrieff	50,566	63.8	28,717	36.2	79,283	100
Moreton	47,418	60.9	30,413	39.1	77,831	100
Oxley	44,655	60.3	29,365	39.7	74,020	100
Petrie	53,144	61.6	33,067	38.4	86,211	100
Rankin	41,570	54.6	34,621	45.4	76,191	100
Ryan	64,967	72.7	24,451	27.3	89,418	100
Wide Bay	46,507	55.6	37,065	44.4	83,572	100
Wright	47,109	56.8	35,812	43.2	82,921	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Queensland (Total)	1,487,060	60.7	961,015	39.3	2,448,075	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Participation

2,455,163 (77.9%) eligible Australians in Queensland participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In Queensland, 80.1% (1,286,719) of eligible females and 75.6% (1,149,465) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In Queensland, those aged 70 to 74 were the most likely to respond to the survey with 89.6% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 20 to 24 at 67.6%.

Participation for Federal Electoral Divisions within Queensland(a)						
Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Blair	78,883	76.7	23,975	23.3	102,858	100
Bonner	84,239	82.4	17,981	17.6	102,220	100
Bowman	86,376	81.4	19,691	18.6	106,067	100
Brisbane	91,733	81.6	20,656	18.4	112,389	100
Capricornia	74,064	74.8	24,896	25.2	98,960	100
Dawson	77,343	74.2	26,943	25.8	104,286	100
Dickson	83,384	81.8	18,527	18.2	101,911	100
Fadden	84,587	76.3	26,234	23.7	110,821	100
Fairfax	91,238	81.0	21,335	19.0	112,573	100
Fisher	83,064	80.9	19,625	19.1	102,689	100
Flynn	76,065	75.6	24,529	24.4	100,594	100
Forde	77,753	76.1	24,423	23.9	102,176	100
Griffith	90,487	81.8	20,133	18.2	110,620	100
Groom	82,713	80.0	20,717	20.0	103,430	100
Herbert	76,758	72.1	29,665	27.9	106,423	100
Hinkler	80,505	78.2	22,425	21.8	102,930	100
Kennedy	71,207	70.5	29,794	29.5	101,001	100
Leichhardt	75,595	67.8	35,841	32.2	111,436	100
Lilley	88,880	81.4	20,249	18.6	109,129	100
Longman	85,102	77.8	24,250	22.2	109,352	100
Maranoa	81,135	78.2	22,553	21.8	103,688	100
McPherson	82,749	78.1	23,214	21.9	105,963	100
Moncrieff	79,497	75.9	25,232	24.1	104,729	100
Moreton	78,051	79.6	20,020	20.4	98,071	100
Oxley	74,244	76.1	23,348	23.9	97,592	100
Petrie	86,411	78.7	23,323	21.3	109,734	100
Rankin	76,428	74.5	26,119	25.5	102,547	100
Ryan	89,580	84.7	16,223	15.3	105,803	100
Wide Bay	83,891	79.5	21,645	20.5	105,536	100
Wright	83,201	79.0	22,144	21.0	105,345	100
Queensland (Total)	2,455,163	77.9	695,710	22.1	3,150,873	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

For more detailed information on response and participation, download the results spreadsheets from the [Downloads](#).

To find out more about the characteristics of New South Wales electoral divisions see [Quickstats](#).

Please note that the Quickstats boundaries are based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) not the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Division boundaries. For further information please see [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 3 - Non ABS Structures, July 2017 \(cat. no. 1270.0.55.003\)](#)

South Australia

RESULTS FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians in South Australia (SA) who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 592,528 (62.5%) responding Yes and 356,247 (37.5%) responding No. Nearly 8 out of 10 eligible Australians in SA (79.7%) expressed their view.

Response by Federal Electoral Divisions within South Australia(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Adelaide	62,769	70.1	26,771	29.9	89,540	100
Barker	42,498	52.3	38,827	47.7	81,325	100
Boothby	62,139	68.5	28,556	31.5	90,695	100
Grey	40,811	53.3	35,750	46.7	76,561	100
Hindmarsh	57,947	63.3	33,613	36.7	91,560	100
Kingston	58,863	68.1	27,567	31.9	86,430	100
Makin	51,547	60.4	33,743	39.6	85,290	100
Mayo	57,361	64.7	31,247	35.3	88,608	100
Port Adelaide	53,649	61.3	33,869	38.7	87,518	100
Sturt	52,308	61.6	32,655	38.4	84,963	100
Wakefield	52,636	61.0	33,649	39.0	86,285	100
South Australia (Total)	592,528	62.5	356,247	37.5	948,775	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Participation

951,553 (79.7%) eligible Australians in SA participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In SA, 82.0% (497,538) of eligible females and 77.3% (443,903) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In SA those aged 70 to 74 were the most likely to respond to the survey, with 90.4% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 25 to 29 at 71.2%.

Participation by Federal Electoral Divisions within South Australia(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Adelaide	89,757	81.4	20,477	18.6	110,234	100
Barker	81,568	77.0	24,297	23.0	105,865	100
Boothby	90,929	84.3	16,919	15.7	107,848	100
Grey	76,821	75.2	25,327	24.8	102,148	100
Hindmarsh	91,833	81.7	20,548	18.3	112,381	100
Kingston	86,682	80.7	20,764	19.3	107,446	100
Makin	85,532	79.5	21,991	20.5	107,523	100
Mayo	88,869	83.8	17,239	16.2	106,108	100
Port Adelaide	87,794	76.3	27,253	23.7	115,047	100
Sturt	85,215	81.4	19,410	18.6	104,625	100
Wakefield	86,553	75.7	27,802	24.3	114,355	100
South Australia (Total)	951,553	79.7	242,027	20.3	1,193,580	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

For more detailed information on response and participation, download the results spreadsheets from the Downloads.

To find out more about the characteristics of New South Wales electoral divisions see Quickstats.

Please note that the Quickstats boundaries are based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) not the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Division boundaries. For further information please see Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 3 - Non ABS Structures, July 2017 (cat. no. 1270.0.55.003)

Western Australia

RESULTS FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians in Western Australia (WA) who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 801,575 (63.7%) responding Yes and 455,924 (36.3%) responding No. Nearly 8 out of 10

eligible Australians in WA (78.4%) expressed their view.

Response by Federal Electoral Divisions within Western Australia(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Brand	51,953	67.1	25,481	32.9	77,434	100
Burt	44,058	57.0	33,275	43.0	77,333	100
Canning	48,486	60.2	32,019	39.8	80,505	100
Cowan	44,388	58.8	31,075	41.2	75,463	100
Curtin	59,638	72.2	22,943	27.8	82,581	100
Durack	39,304	59.2	27,128	40.8	66,432	100
Forrest	51,612	63.8	29,285	36.2	80,897	100
Fremantle	57,541	70.1	24,559	29.9	82,100	100
Hasluck	47,880	62.4	28,836	37.6	76,716	100
Moore	56,690	68.0	26,690	32.0	83,380	100
O'Connor	43,554	56.2	33,987	43.8	77,541	100
Pearce	54,305	63.9	30,699	36.1	85,004	100
Perth	57,510	71.5	22,967	28.5	80,477	100
Stirling	47,225	61.1	30,060	38.9	77,285	100
Swan	49,093	64.7	26,830	35.3	75,923	100
Tangney	48,338	61.6	30,090	38.4	78,428	100
Western Australia (Total)	801,575	63.7	455,924	36.3	1,257,499	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Participation

1,260,687 (78.4%) eligible Australians in WA participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In WA, 80.9% (651,036) of eligible females and 75.8% (594,054) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In WA, those aged 70 to 74 were the most likely to respond to the survey with 89.1% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 25 to 29 at 70.3%.

Participation by Federal Electoral Divisions within Western Australia(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Brand	77,628	76.0	24,466	24.0	102,094	100
Burt	77,502	76.2	24,197	23.8	101,699	100
Canning	80,719	78.5	22,157	21.5	102,876	100
Cowan	75,647	78.0	21,330	22.0	96,977	100
Curtin	82,759	84.0	15,706	16.0	98,465	100
Durack	66,626	67.9	31,428	32.1	98,054	100
Forrest	81,122	78.9	21,752	21.1	102,874	100
Fremantle	82,336	80.6	19,878	19.4	102,214	100
Hasluck	76,946	79.7	19,570	20.3	96,516	100
Moore	83,575	83.2	16,916	16.8	100,491	100
O'Connor	77,775	75.7	24,925	24.3	102,700	100
Pearce	85,213	76.3	26,401	23.7	111,614	100
Perth	80,654	80.5	19,479	19.5	100,133	100
Stirling	77,475	78.4	21,345	21.6	98,820	100
Swan	76,108	77.7	21,857	22.3	97,965	100
Tangney	78,602	84.0	14,926	16.0	93,528	100
Western Australia (Total)	1,260,687	78.4	346,333	21.6	1,607,020	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

For more detailed information on response and participation, download the results spreadsheets from the [Downloads](#).

To find out more about the characteristics of New South Wales electoral divisions see [Quickstats](#).

Please note that the Quickstats boundaries are based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) not the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Division boundaries. For further information please see [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 3 - Non ABS Structures, July 2017 \(cat. no. 1270.0.55.003\)](#)

Tasmania

RESULTS FOR TASMANIA

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians in Tasmania who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 191,948 (63.6%) responding

Yes and 109,655 (36.4%) responding No. Nearly 8 out of 10 eligible Australians in Tasmania (79.7%) expressed their view.

Response by Federal Electoral Divisions within Tasmania(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Bass	36,249	61.7	22,510	38.3	58,759	100
Braddon	30,054	54.0	25,573	46.0	55,627	100
Denison	45,005	73.8	15,992	26.2	60,997	100
Franklin	44,746	68.8	20,322	31.2	65,068	100
Lyons	35,894	58.7	25,258	41.3	61,152	100
Tasmania (Total)	191,948	63.6	109,655	36.4	301,603	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

Participation

302,408 (79.7%) eligible Australians in Tasmania participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In Tasmania, 81.7% (159,487) of eligible females and 77.5% (141,006) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In Tasmania, those aged 70 to 79 were the most likely to respond to the survey with 89.8% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 25 to 29 at 68.7%.

Participation by Federal Electoral Divisions within Tasmania(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Bass	58,904	79.2	15,487	20.8	74,391	100
Braddon	55,781	76.0	17,632	24.0	73,413	100
Denison	61,164	82.4	13,092	17.6	74,256	100
Franklin	65,231	82.7	13,605	17.3	78,836	100
Lyons	61,328	78.1	17,204	21.9	78,532	100
Tasmania (Total)	302,408	79.7	77,020	20.3	379,428	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

For more detailed information on response and participation, download the results spreadsheets from the Downloads.

To find out more about the characteristics of New South Wales electoral divisions see Quickstats.

Please note that the Quickstats boundaries are based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) not the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Division boundaries. For further information please see Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 3 - Non ABS Structures, July 2017 (cat. no. 1270.0.55.003)

Northern Territory

RESULTS FOR NORTHERN TERRITORY

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians in the Northern Territory (NT) who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 48,686 (60.6%) responding Yes and 31,690 (39.4%) responding No. Nearly 6 out of 10 eligible Australians in the NT (58.4%) expressed their view.

Response by Federal Electoral Divisions within the Northern Territory(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Lingiari(b)	19,026	54.5	15,898	45.5	34,924	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Solomon	29,660	65.3	15,792	34.7	45,452	100
Northern Territory (Total)	48,686	60.6	31,690	39.4	80,376	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Participation

80,605 (58.4%) eligible Australians in the NT participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In the NT, 60.7% (41,106) of eligible females and 56.0% (38,997) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In the NT, those aged 75 to 79 were the most likely to respond to the survey with 74.9% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 20 to 24 at 46.4%.

Participation by Federal Electoral Divisions within the Northern Territory(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Lingiari(c)	35,030	50.1	34,854	49.9	69,884	100
Solomon	45,575	66.8	22,642	33.2	68,217	100
Northern Territory (Total)	80,605	58.4	57,496	41.6	138,101	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

(c) Includes Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

For more detailed information on response and participation, download the results spreadsheets from the [Downloads](#).

To find out more about the characteristics of New South Wales electoral divisions see [Quickstats](#).

Please note that the Quickstats boundaries are based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) not the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Division boundaries. For further information please see [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 3 - Non ABS Structures, July 2017 \(cat. no. 1270.0.55.003\)](#)

Australian Capital Territory

RESULTS FOR AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Response

Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

Of the eligible Australians in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) who expressed a view on this question, the majority indicated that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry, with 175,459 (74.0%) responding Yes and 61,520 (26.0%) responding No. More than 8 out of 10 eligible Australians in the ACT (82.4%) expressed their view.

Response by Federal Electoral Divisions within the Australian Capital Territory(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Yes		No		Total	
	no.	Yes %	no.	No %	no.	%
Canberra(b)	89,590	74.1	31,361	25.9	120,951	100
Fenner(c)	85,869	74.0	30,159	26.0	116,028	100
Australian Capital Territory (Total)	175,459	74.0	61,520	26.0	236,979	100
Australia (Total)	7,817,247	61.6	4,873,987	38.4	12,691,234	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes Norfolk Island.

(c) Includes Jervis Bay.

Participation

237,513 (82.4%) eligible Australians in the ACT participated in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

Females were more likely to respond than males. In the ACT, 84.6% (123,738) of eligible females and 80.1% (110,992) of eligible males responded to the survey.

In the ACT, those aged 70 to 74 were the most likely to respond to the survey with 90.9% of eligible Australians in this age group participating. The participation rate was lowest in those aged 20 to 24 at 77.5%.

Participation by Federal Electoral Divisions within the Australian Capital Territory(a)

Federal Electoral Division	Total responding(b)		Non-responding		Total	
	no.	Total responding(b) %	no.	Non-responding %	no.	%
Canberra(c)	121,232	83.2	24,399	16.8	145,631	100
Fenner(d)	116,281	81.6	26,196	18.4	142,477	100
Australian Capital Territory (Total)	237,513	82.4	50,595	17.6	288,108	100
Australia (Total)	12,727,920	79.5	3,278,260	20.5	16,006,180	100

(a) The Federal Electoral Division boundaries are current as at 24 August 2017.

(b) Includes response not clear and blank responses.

(c) Includes Norfolk Island.

(d) Includes Jervis Bay.

For more detailed information on response and participation, download the results spreadsheets from the [Downloads](#).

To find out more about the characteristics of New South Wales electoral divisions see [Quickstats](#).

Please note that the Quickstats boundaries are based on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) not the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Division boundaries. For further information please see Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 3 - Non ABS Structures, July 2017 (cat. no. 1270.0.55.003)

Quality and integrity statement

QUALITY AND INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Summary

Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (AMLPS) statistics meet the requirements of the *Census and Statistics (Statistical Information) Direction 2017* issued by the Treasurer on 9 August 2017.

The collection and processing of survey responses was undertaken with rigour and the results accurately reflect the views of survey respondents.

An overall participation rate of 79.5%, with consistent distribution across age groups, gender and geography, is a strong indicator of quality. This high participation rate was achieved because of Australians' significant interest in this topic combined with the statistical collection design and process which promoted participation and ensured quality and integrity, in particular:

- A simple survey form containing a single question, supported with straightforward instructions that made it easy for participants to understand and respond.
- The very high proportion of participants complying with the form's instructions, enabling accurate coding of responses (with accuracy reviewed by external observers).
- Rigorous survey methods that included quality controls and integrity checks which were subject to independent review and assurance.
- Protections against fraud that included mechanisms to guarantee only one response was counted for each participant.

"The approach adopted by the ABS was innovative, thorough and comprehensive and has supported the transparent and rigorous management of risks to the Survey."

Protiviti

Protiviti was engaged to provide independent assurance of the rigour and quality of survey processes.

Data quality declaration

ABS Quality Declarations provide information about the quality of statistics to promote informed and appropriate use.

Institutional environment

Definition: Information on the institutional environment within which the data are collected and processed. This includes such information as legislative obligations, financing and governance, and the transparency of the operations.

The ABS is Australia's national statistical agency, providing trusted official statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters of importance to Australia. The ABS plays an important leadership role coordinating statistical activities and collaborating with official bodies in the collection, compilation, analysis and distribution of statistics.

More information on the ABS institutional environment can be found within the [Methods, Standards and Classifications](#) page of the ABS website.

Recognising many in the community expected the ABS to operate a plebiscite-like process, the ABS included a number of special integrity measures in the conduct of the AMLPS:

- independent assurance of quality and integrity controls
- an 'external observer' program through which observers nominated by two ('Yes' and 'No') committees of parliamentarians reviewed the way ABS coded the marks on more than 600,000 survey form responses
- a Fraud Control Plan and fraud control measures.

More detail on these measures is provided in the Integrity Section below.

Relevance

Definition: Information that will allow users to determine whether the data presented is relevant for a particular need

The AMLPS was conducted to meet the requirements of the *Census and Statistics (Statistical Information) Direction 2017* issued by the Treasurer on 9 August 2017 (and amended on 17 August 2017). ABS was directed to collect statistical information about:

- the proportion of electors who wish to express a view about whether the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry
- the proportion of participating electors who are in favour of the law being changed to allow same-sex couples to marry
- the proportion of participating electors who are against the law being changed to allow same-sex couples to marry.

AMLPS statistics meet the requirements of the Government's direction.

Timeliness

Definition: Information that will help users to determine if the data is current enough for the intended purpose, or if it relates to the period of interest.

The statistical collection occurred from 13 September 2017 to 7 November 2017, with the results released on 15 November 2017.

Accuracy

Definition: Information about how precisely the statistics measure the true quantities of interest

79.5% of eligible Australians responded to the survey. This high level of participation was consistently distributed across:

- age groups (with all age group participation rates above 71.9%)
- gender (male participation rate of 77.3% and female participation rate of 81.6%)
- states and territories (7 out of 8 states and territories with participation rates over 77.9%)
- divisions (146 of 150 Federal Electoral Divisions with participation rates above 70.5%).

The ABS implemented a range of measures to support participation, including:

- an extensive communication campaign
- the ability to use a trusted person to assist with survey form completion
- paperless options where post wouldn't work
- easy replacement of survey forms
- pick-up and drop-off locations in capital cities and regional and remote areas
- extra support to promote participation by:
 - Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
 - Australians overseas including posted Australian Government employees and those living in Australian Territories
 - People who were away from home (i.e. long term domestic travellers)
 - People with a disability
 - People who do not speak English
 - People experiencing homelessness
 - People in aged care facilities
 - Silent electors
 - People serving custodial sentences (of less than 3 years).

"The ABS proactively engaged with the disability sector in order to determine best practice supports... appropriate adjustments were also made available within a relatively short period of time. In my view, this set the Bureau apart as a leader in implementing accessible alternatives on a national scale."

Alistair McEwin
Disability Discrimination Commissioner

Participation was promoted through clear communication of ABS' commitment to keeping survey responses completely confidential. A Privacy Plan was published on the marriage survey web site and privacy measures were validated by an independent expert.

The form and accompanying letter were designed using behavioural economics principles, then tested and refined to ensure both comprehension and easy, early completion.

Coding of survey responses was highly automated with 95.0% of survey forms automatically coded. The remaining forms were manually coded by trained staff. Feedback from external observers confirmed that all coding was highly accurate. Further information is available on the External Observer Program page.

Coherence

Definition: Information about the comparability of the information with other key related statistics, and changes in this collection over time

This collection has not been conducted previously, and no other source of these data exists.

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) Federal Electoral Divisions used in the AMLPS concord well with the Commonwealth Electoral Divisions usually used by the ABS. Further information is available in the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).

The age classification is consistent with other ABS collections. The gender data item on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll is not completely consistent with the ABS sex standard.

Interpretability

Definition: Provides information on where to find more detail about the collection to help with interpretation and understanding.

The results are simple counts and are easy to interpret. The ABS has published infographics, tables, and spreadsheets with explanatory notes that include details of the survey, the classifications used and a glossary of definitions.

Accessibility

Definition: Information on the ease of finding and acquiring data.

Survey data are freely available on the ABS website. Information Line assistance is available.

Integrity

Recognising many in the community expected the ABS to operate a plebiscite-like process, the ABS included a number of special integrity measures in the conduct of the AMLPS:

- independent assurance of quality and integrity controls
- an 'external observer' program through which observers nominated by two ('Yes' and 'No') committees of Commonwealth parliamentarians reviewed the way ABS coded the marks on more than 600,000 survey form responses
- a Fraud Control Plan and fraud control measures.

Independent Assurance

The ABS engaged global consulting firm Protiviti to provide independent quality assurance of AMLPS processes, and provided the following statement:

"The ABS designed and implemented integrity controls over the end to end processes for managing and delivering the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (the Survey). These integrity controls included Integrity Gates at all critical points of the process.

Protiviti provided assurance over the end to end processes for delivery of the Survey. This encompassed more than 30 Integrity Gates that spanned processes in the Survey from the initial mail despatch through to the compilation of statistical outputs.

Protiviti provided assurance over the design of the Integrity Gates (whether the design of the Integrity Gate was appropriate to the task being checked and whether the checks were appropriate for the risks faced) and the application of the Integrity Gates (whether the checks were executed as intended). The assurance included consideration of the third parties supporting the end to end process. A key aspect of the independent assurance performed by Protiviti was the provision of formal sign off letter for each of the Integrity Gates.

The approach adopted by the ABS was innovative, thorough and comprehensive and has supported the transparent and rigorous management of risks to the Survey."

External observer program

External observers, nominated by the Yes and No committees of Commonwealth Parliamentarians, were engaged to provide feedback on a key element of the survey process: the accurate coding of returned paper survey forms.

The Commonwealth parliamentary committees were established solely for the purposes of the survey, one representing the Yes position, and one representing the No position. Each committee nominated around 60 external observers.

Observers from both committees provided feedback on the coding of 606,991 survey returns which established that the accuracy of the survey return coding was extremely high with no bias in the capture of Yes or No responses.

A full report on the External Observer Program is available.

Fraud control

The ABS put comprehensive measures in place to prevent, detect, respond to and report on potential fraud in the AMLPS.

A designated Fraud Examiner was appointed to develop, implement and maintain a Fraud Control Plan to prevent, detect, assess, investigate, respond to and report on potential fraud in the AMLPS.

The controls implemented to prevent fraud in the AMLPS included:

- the introduction of the *Marriage Law Survey (Additional Safeguards) Act 2017* which included provisions against fraud, specifically around the sale or purchase of survey forms
- physical security of survey materials at all processing locations
- use of secure access codes and single use 'mark in' codes to prevent counterfeiting of survey responses
- reconciliation using the unique barcode on each survey form to ensure that only one response would be counted for each eligible respondent
- cyber security controls including extensive use of data encryption
- identity checks before issuing secure access codes and replacement survey forms
- all staff involved in the AMLPS signed personal undertakings to remain impartial
- all ABS staff were subject to the *Marriage Law Survey (Additional Safeguards) Act 2017*, the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* and the APS Code of Conduct.

In developing the Fraud Control Plan the ABS undertook a comprehensive risk assessment of all operations associated with the AMLPS.

The Fraud Examiner worked closely with the Risk Manager throughout the process to monitor and review changing risk profiles in relation to fraud risks.

In addition to fraud controls, the ABS took a proactive approach to managing fraud risks including:

- responding quickly to resolve issues
- engaging with online market providers to block and remove attempts to sell survey forms and responses
- encouraging members of the public to report suspicious or criminal behaviour
- raising awareness through the media of the serious penalties for fraud
- guidance on the AMLPS website about the Safeguards Act and how to raise complaints
- referring suspected cases of fraud to the relevant authorities.

Throughout the survey period, issues reported to the ABS accounted for fewer than 500 individual survey forms (less than 0.0032% of over 16 million forms issued). These issues related to allegations of mail theft, survey forms offered for sale, persons influencing the response of vulnerable people, and the intention to respond to the survey on another person's behalf without their authorisation to do so.

External observers

EXTERNAL OBSERVERS

Summary of results

Over the course of the observation program, external observers provided feedback on the coding decision made by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on 606,991 survey returns.

Type of survey response	Total number of survey returns	Survey returns observed		Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision		Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision	
		no.	Survey returns observed %	no.	Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision %	no.	Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision %
Automatically coded Yes or No survey returns	12,090,959	311,318	2.6	1	0.0003	311,317	99.9997
Manually coded Yes or No survey returns	600,275	261,678	43.6	337	0.1	261,341	99.9
Blank survey returns	16,912	15,659	92.6	29	0.2	15,630	99.8
Response Not Clear survey returns	19,774	18,336	92.7	625	3.4	17,711	96.6

Rates of agreement with the ABS decision applied to an individual survey return ranged from 99.9997% of automatically coded forms, to 96.6% of forms coded as Response Not Clear.

These rates of agreement indicate, that if the observers were to have provided feedback on all 12,727,920 survey responses, then observers would have agreed with 99.99% of forms processed, which equates to 9 survey return disagreements per electoral division.

There were comparable numbers of Yes and No disagreements, such that if all of the disagreements were added up, and the observer's recommendation adopted, there would be a net decrease in the survey margin of just 56 survey responses at the national level.

These results demonstrate that the accuracy of the survey return coding was very high, and that there was no bias in the capture of Yes or No responses.

There were additional survey returns observed where only one observer disagreed with the ABS coding decision; these instances are detailed below.

Establishment and processes

Establishment of the observer program

External observers were engaged to provide feedback on a key element of the survey process: the coding of returned paper survey forms as Yes, No or Response Not Clear.

Two Commonwealth parliamentary committees were established solely for the purposes of the survey, one representing the yes position, and one representing the no position. Each committee nominated around 60 external observers each.

The role of observers was different to that of a scrutineer in an election. As the survey was conducted under the authority of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the rights and obligations of scrutineers under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*, the *Referendum (Machinery Provisions) Act 1984*, or other legislation did not apply.

Survey data capture and coding processes

All paper survey returns were opened and scanned at one of five processing centres across Australia and the digital images of scanned forms were then processed at the processing centre in Sydney.

The digital images were processed by an automatic coding system. Survey forms with only a single response box marked, no amendments made to the survey question or survey answers, and no other marks made in the white spaces to the left and right of the response boxes, were automatically coded as Yes or No.

95% of all returned survey forms were automatically coded as Yes or No.

Forms that could not be automatically coded were manually coded by trained coders in the processing centre in Sydney.

Manual coding was informed by a set of coding guidelines which were developed in consultation with the two parliamentary committees and the Australian Electoral Commission.

4.7% of survey returns were manually coded as Yes or No, while a further 0.3% were manually coded as Blank or Response Not Clear.

Observer process

Observers worked over a six week period, between 29 September and 8 November 2017, at the processing centre in Sydney.

Observers from both committees were shown a sample of digital images of paper survey forms, along with the survey response as coded by the ABS for that form. Survey responses were coded as either Yes, No, Blank or Response Not Clear.

Where one or both observers disagreed with the decision made by the ABS, the disagreement was recorded, along with the observer's suggested response.

The samples of returns selected for observer review was designed to ensure that:

- nearly all returns coded as Blank or Response Not Clear were viewed by the observers
- a significant proportion of survey responses that were manually coded (coded by a human operator rather than the automatic coding system) were viewed by the observers.
- an approximately equal number of returns coded as Yes and No were reviewed by observers so that they would not have any indication of the overall survey result.

Feedback from observers did not change the recorded result for survey forms; it was recorded for reporting purposes only.

Detailed results

Automatically coded responses

There were 12,090,959 survey returns (95% of the total) that were automatically coded as either Yes or No. Observers provided feedback on 311,318 (2.6%) of these survey returns.

Observer feedback indicates that automatic coding was highly accurate. There was only a single instance where observers from both sides disagreed with the ABS code. In this case, both observers considered that the survey return should have been coded as Response Not Clear.

Type of survey response	Survey returns observed	Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision		Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision	
		no.	Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision %	no.	Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision %
Automatically coded as Yes	155,656	-	-	155,656	100
Automatically coded as No	155,662	1	0.0006	155,661	99.9994
Total automatically coded survey returns	311,318	1	0.0003	311,317	99.9997

Manually coded responses

There were 600,275 survey returns (4.7% of the total) that were manually coded as either Yes or No. Observers provided feedback on 261,678 (43.6%) of these survey forms.

Observer feedback indicates that manual coding was very accurate. There were 337 instances where observers from both sides disagreed with the ABS coding decision. This represented 0.1% of all manually coded forms. Of these 337 instances, the ABS coded 236 as Yes and 101 as No.

The ABS developed very conservative rules for the use of automatic coding that included referring any survey returns which contained marks in the spaces to the left of the Yes response box, or the right of the No response box, for manual coding. This was done to ensure that any survey returns that may have had additional comments written on the form, that may have been material to the capture of the survey response, could be reviewed.

A consequence of this approach was that a higher proportion of No responses were referred to manual coding. Ticks made with a long tail in the No box were in some cases identified by the automatic coding system as possibly having additional markings, and were referred for manual coding. This was not the case for Yes responses indicated with a long tailed tick. Excluding these instances, the overall rate of disagreement for Yes and No manually coded responses is very similar.

Type of survey response	Survey returns observed	Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision		Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision	
		no.	Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision %	no.	Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision %
Manually coded as Yes	131,049	236	0.2	130,813	99.8
Manually coded as No	130,629	101	0.1	130,528	99.9
Total manually coded survey returns	261,678	337	0.1	261,341	99.9

Response not clear and blank responses

There were 19,774 survey returns (0.2% of the total) that were coded as Response Not Clear. Additionally 16,912 (0.1%) survey forms were returned blank. Observers provided feedback on 33,995, or 92.7% of these survey forms.

Where the intent of the survey respondent could not be determined, the survey response was coded as Response Not Clear. This commonly occurred where the forms were vandalised, where no attempt to answer the question had been made, or where both response boxes were marked.

There were 654 instances where observers from both sides disagreed with the ABS coding of the form as Response Not Clear or Blank. This represented 0.2% of all Blank survey returns, and 3.4% of survey returns coded as Response Not Clear.

Type of survey response	Survey returns observed	Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision		Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision	
		no.	Instances where both observers disagreed with ABS coding decision %	no.	Instances where one or both observers agreed with ABS coding decision %
Blank	15,659	29	0.2	15,630	99.8
Response Not Clear	18,336	625	3.4	17,711	96.6
Total Blank and Response not clear survey returns	33,995	654	1.9	33,341	98.1

Implications for overall survey results

As observers provided feedback on only a sample of the survey results, to measure the impact on the survey result, the ABS has extrapolated the disagreement rates to cover the additional forms not viewed.

To extrapolate the results of the observer program to cover all returned survey forms, the ABS used the proportion of survey forms where both observers disagreed, and applied that to the total number of survey forms returned.

The estimated total number of disagreements, had the observers viewed all survey returns, is shown below.

Type of survey response	Number of instances where both observers disagreed with the ABS coding decision	Estimated number of disagreements had observers viewed all survey returns
Automatically coded Yes or No survey returns	1	29
Manually coded Yes or No survey returns	337	636
Blank survey returns	29	31
Response Not Clear survey returns	625	674
Total	-	1,370

At the national level, this indicates that there would have been 1,370 survey responses where the both observers would have been expected to have disagreed with the ABS. This equates to 9 survey responses per electoral division.

Where observers raised a disagreement with the decision applied by the ABS, the coding result that the observers thought should have been applied was recorded by the ABS.

The following table shows the observer suggested coding results against the ABS coded response extrapolated across all survey forms in order to see the potential difference to the survey results.

ABS coded response as	Yes	No	Blank	Response not clear	No agreement between observers/ Insufficient information	Total
Yes	-	135	-	148	18	301
No	133	-	-	218	13	364
Blank	5	23	-	2	1	31
Response Not Clear	266	365	1	-	42	674
Total	404	523	1	368	74	1,370

These figures show that had the ABS applied code proposed by observers, there would have been, at the national level:

- 30 fewer returns recorded as Blank
- 306 fewer returns recorded as Response Not Clear
- 103 additional returns recorded as Yes responses
- 159 additional returns recorded as No responses.

This would have resulted in a net decrease in the survey margin of 56 responses across Australia.

Instances where only one observer disagreed with the ABS

There were an additional 386 instances where one of the observers disagreed with the coding decision made by the ABS, while the other observer agreed with the decision made by the ABS. These instances are shown below.

Type of survey response	Survey returns observed	Only one observer disagreed with ABS coding decisions (Yes observer)		Only one observer disagreed with ABS coding decision (No observer)	
		no.	Only one observer disagreed with ABS coding decisions (Yes observer)%	no.	Only one observer disagreed with ABS coding decision (No observer)%
Automatically coded survey returns	Yes	155,656	-	-	-
	No	155,662	-	-	-
Manually coded survey returns	Yes	131,049	-	40	0.03
	No	130,629	47	0.04	-
Blank		15,659	2	0.01	3
Response Not Clear survey returns		18,336	149	0.8	145



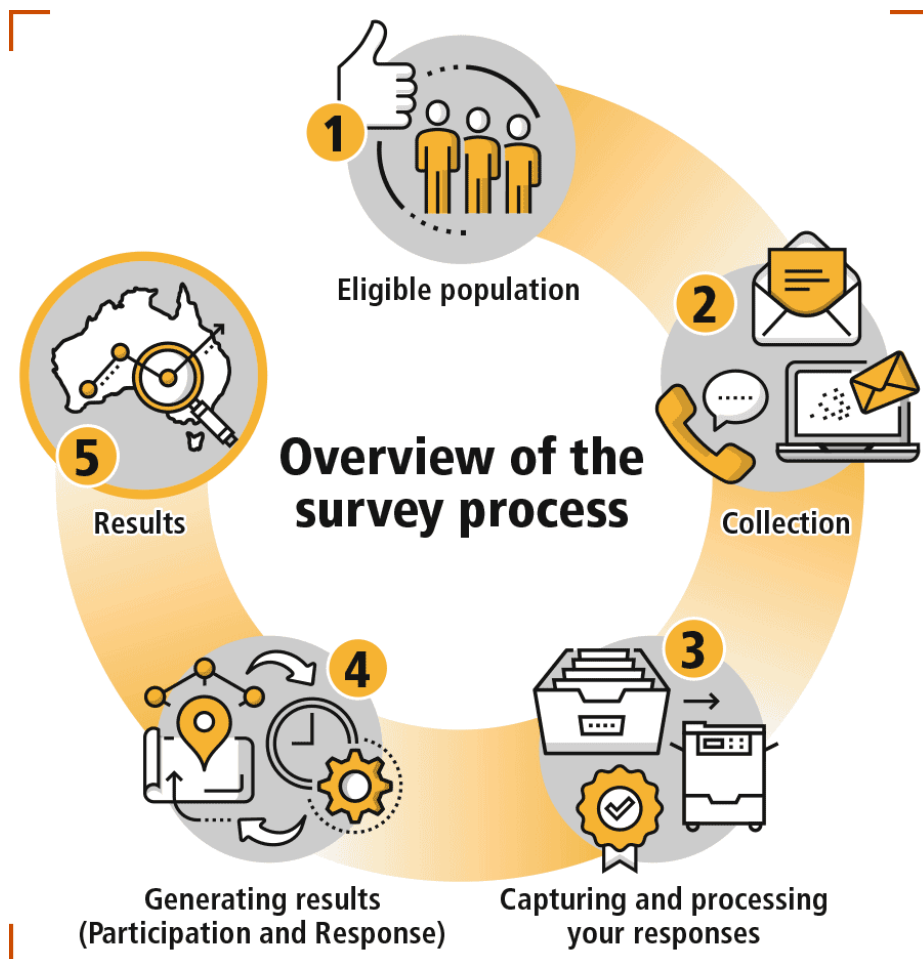
AMLPS_coding_guidelines.pdf

Survey process

SURVEY PROCESS

Commissioning
Eligibility
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Survey frame

Completing the survey
 Inclusion Strategies
 Silent electors
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 AMLPS Information Line and Online Enquiries
 Drop off strategy
 Capturing and processing your response
 Paper survey forms
 Online and telephony survey forms
 Generating the survey results and ensuring anonymity
 Securing survey responses



Commissioning

On 9 August 2017 the Australian Treasurer directed the Australian Statistician to request statistical information from all Australians on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll, on whether or not the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry. On 16 August 2017, the Minister for Finance, acting on behalf of the Treasurer, amended the direction to the Australian Statistician to confirm that Australians 18 years and older on the electoral roll as at 24 August would be included in the survey.

The Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (AMLPS) was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in response to this direction.

Eligibility

All people enrolled on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll (or those who had made a valid request for enrolment) by 24 August 2017, and being 18 years of age, and not serving a prison sentence of three years or longer were eligible to participate in the AMLPS.

Participation in the AMLPS was voluntary.

COLLECTION

Survey frame

To administer the AMLPS, and ensure integrity of the responses received, the ABS created a statistical survey frame (hereafter referred to as the "frame"). The Commonwealth Electoral Roll (as at 24th August 2017) formed the basis of this frame, providing details of eligible electors (including names and addresses, date of birth and gender).

The frame was used to provide name and address for each eligible Australian to the print/mail house where survey materials were created and mailed. Date of birth and gender information from the frame was used to provide the demographic breakdown of participation information only.

Completing the survey

The AMLPS collection period ran from 12 September 2017 (when the mail-out of survey forms began), to 7 November 2017.

Eligible Australians were able to provide a new address, or request replacement forms, via the Australian Marriage Law Survey website or the survey Information Line.

Nearly all eligible Australian electors received their survey materials by post. Survey materials included a survey form, a reply paid envelope and a letter with instructions on how to complete the survey form. The survey asked one question: *should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?*

Respondents were asked to indicate either yes or no to the one question by marking the appropriate response box, and then return their survey form using the reply paid envelope.



AMLPS_survey_form.pdf



AMLPS_survey_letter.pdf

Survey responses could also be provided via an online form and a telephony service. These options were available for eligible Australians who:

- were overseas throughout the collection period;
- had blindness, low vision or other disability that made the paper form a more difficult option; or
- were in a remote or other location throughout the collection periods where they could not reasonably access a form by post.

Eligible Australians in these categories were able to obtain a Secure Access Code (SAC) through the survey Information Line or the ABS website throughout the period 25 September 2017 to 20 October 2017.

Inclusion Strategies

The ABS engaged with a wide range of government departments and agencies, and external stakeholders to promote participation by all eligible Australians.

Silent electors

The AEC and ABS took measures to protect the privacy of silent electors and Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Australian Federal Police (AFP) personnel who were registered with the AEC as being deployed overseas. The AEC printed survey forms for these electors, with non-identifiable barcodes provided by the ABS (like with all other forms), using a different mail house to the one used by the ABS. The survey packs included an addressed letter from the Electoral Commissioner, and an unaddressed letter from the Australian Statistician. A designated telephone Hotline administered by the AEC was set up to assist these electors. Silent electors were also able to access replacement materials, and the online or telephony response service, where required. At no time was the ABS provided with the name, address, gender or age of any silent elector or registered ADF or AFP personnel. For this reason, the age and gender statistics of silent electors and registered ADF and AFP personnel are not included in the survey participation rates.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities, Rural and Remote Australians

Survey forms were posted to all eligible participants' addresses within Australia including; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, PO boxes and nominated identified mail addresses (shelters, hotels, workers camps, Australia Post offices (forwarded mail set up)). In cases where there was no street address or household mail delivery, mail was held for collection at their local mail agent (like all other mail).

Information about the AMLPS was advertised through radio, print media, social media and television. Specific material was translated into twelve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and was available on the ABS website and at regional and remote pick up locations. In addition to this in-language support, a trusted person process could be used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander persons to assist them to understand and participate in the survey.

While most residents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities used the paper form, people in remote areas were also given the option of participating online or by telephone.

ABS staff travelled to over two hundred locations across remote locations, regional centres and capital cities in order to provide form pick-up locations, where eligible Australians could collect or return forms, or receive assistance on the survey.

These staff were all experienced in remote work, most having undertaken similar field work through the Census of Population and Housing or elections. Staff received further specialist training for assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including cultural awareness training, engagement with communities and training in protocols and customs.

Separate to ABS pick-up locations, the ABS partnered with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide additional opportunities for people in remote locations to contact the ABS at one of their 600 access points across Australia. Each service point provided self-service computers/phones where people could freely access the survey Information Line and the ABS website. This allowed for a person to request new materials from the ABS and to participate in the survey using online or telephony options.

Australians overseas

People who had an overseas postal address listed on the Electoral Roll were posted a letter containing a SAC to respond online or by phone. No paper forms were posted overseas. Australians temporarily overseas may have been able to complete their form before they left or after they returned. Forms were delivered to Australian nominated addresses by 25 September 2017, including people that notified the AEC that they would be temporarily overseas. Eligible Australians overseas for the entire collection period could also ask a trusted person to respond to the survey on their behalf. Otherwise, they were able to request a SAC and complete the survey online or by phone.

People with a disability

Support was available for people with an illness, injury or disability who found completing the survey difficult. The ABS worked in partnership with National Relay Service (NRS) to assist people, particularly those who have a hearing or speech impairment to complete the survey. People could also ask a trusted person (a family member or friend) to help them complete the survey, or to complete the survey on their behalf. People with an illness, injury or disability could also request a SAC to respond online or by phone. All survey materials and the ABS website were designed to maximise accessibility for people with vision, hearing or intellectual disabilities. The AMLPS Information Line was also available to provide assistance to people.

Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Alastair McEwin, commended the Australian Bureau of Statistics on their approach to ensure people

with disabilities were included in this survey. He noted, *"the Bureau pro-actively engaged with the sector in order to determine best practice supports"*, and that *"appropriate adjustments were also made available within a relatively short period of time. In my view, this set the Bureau apart as a leader in implementing accessible alternatives on a national scale."*

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

Eligible Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds were able to complete the survey independently through the postal service with the assistance of a trusted person (a family member or friend) or through the support of Translating and Interpreting Services (TIS). There were instructions in 15 languages on the reverse side of the letter sent with the survey form on how to contact the TIS.

People experiencing homelessness

People experiencing homelessness who were unable to access their mail, were able to participate in the survey by collecting a survey form from an ABS pick-up location, requesting a survey form to be posted to an address of a trusted person (a family member or friend) to hold the form for them to collect or requesting a SAC and complete the survey online or by phone.

People in aged care facilities

Survey materials were posted to aged care facility residents' addresses on the Electoral Roll or to an alternative address advised to the ABS. People in aged care facilities were able to complete the survey independently through the postal service with the assistance of a trusted person (a family member or friend) or by requesting a SAC and complete the survey online or by phone.

AMLPS Information Line and Online Enquiries

The AMLPS Information Line was open from Monday 14 August until Friday 24 November. This service utilised a free call 1800 number for callers within Australia, and also a phone number that overseas callers could access. Between 14 August 2017 and 7 November 2017 the Information Line was open to the public from 8am to 8pm (local time) seven days a week. From 8 to 24 November 2017 the opening hours were reduced to 9am to 5pm (local time) Monday to Friday as a result of decreasing number of calls.

From 14 August 2017 until 7 November 2017 the Information Line received 206,828 calls.

The busiest day for the Information Line was 24 August 2017 (the close of the Electoral Roll) which resulted in 26,912 telephone enquiries.

The Information Line utilised the Translating and Interpreting Service for callers who needed language assistance. Between 14 August 2017 and 7 November 2017 there were 244 calls to the Information Line through this service.

From 25 August 2017, people were also able to submit enquiries through online forms. Between 25 August 2017 and 7 November 2017 there were 133,936 online enquiries.

Of these, 125,819 were requests for survey forms or secure access codes which were automatically processed and responded to. Overall, over 97% of online enquiries were responded to within 48 hours.

Drop off strategy

In the final weeks of the survey, ABS offices were set up as drop off points enabling members of the public to hand in their survey form before the 7 November deadline. The drop off locations were advertised on the Marriage Survey website and were promoted in the media. All forms received were stored securely until close of business on the 7th of November when they were securely transferred by an ABS officer to the nearest processing site. Nearly 1,000 forms were received at ABS offices across the country (with over 50% of these received on 7th November) and all forms received were processed and included in the final count.

CAPTURING AND PROCESSING YOUR RESPONSE

Paper survey forms

Paper survey forms were mailed back to five scanning centres across Australia. At each centre, the forms were removed from their envelopes and scanned. The scanned images were securely uploaded to a central system where Optical Mark Recognition software was used to capture the barcode and the marks on the form in digital form. Where the marks on the form were simple (i.e. where one response box only was marked and no other marks were made on the form) the form was automatically coded to the appropriate response. Where the marks on the form were more complex (i.e. both response boxes were marked, or a combination of response boxes and other marks existed) the form was manually coded. Manual coding involved a human operator making a determination on the appropriate response. Coding staff followed a set of guidelines that were developed in consultation with Parliamentary Committees and the Australian Electoral Commission.

Quality of coding (please refer to Quality and Integrity Statement for detailed quality information)

- 12,056,512 (95.0%) of **paper** responses were automatically coded.
- 636,961 (5.0%) of **paper** responses were manually coded; 4.3% coded to a Yes or No, and 0.7% coded to Blank or Response not clear
- 24.0% of manually coded records were quality assured (separate to the External Observer process) and in 99.7% of cases the records were verified as correctly coded.

Online and telephony survey forms

A total of 34,447 responses to the survey were received through online and telephony forms. Unlike paper survey forms, only a valid response could be given through online and telephone channels.

Generating the survey results and ensuring anonymity

The barcode on the survey form was a single-use, anonymous code and provided the mechanism for ensuring that forms could not be counterfeited or duplicated. They also served to ensure that only one response was counted for each eligible person. If a person requested a new form, they were issued a new barcode and their original barcode was marked as invalid. If a person tried to submit more than one response using the same barcode, only one of the responses was counted.

Where barcodes were not able to be read (damaged or defaced) the form was not counted.

Once verified, a list of valid barcodes and their associated electoral divisions was sent from the ABS to the Processing site. The Processing site used this list to update each response record (Yes, No) with their associated electoral division. A file was then generated listing only responses (Yes, No) and electoral divisions, and no barcode, and sent back to the ABS. It was this method of operation that enabled the ABS to ensure all responses were both legitimate and completely confidential (refer to diagram below). At no time was it possible to connect the identity of the elector to their response, as the Processing site did not hold names and addresses and the ABS only received responses (Yes, No) associated with electoral divisions.

Infographic showing information flow and confidentiality. More detail following.

Results from the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey have been produced showing;

- the number of Yes, No and unclear responses and their percentages at the National, State/Territory and Federal Electoral Division levels, and
- the level of survey participation classified by age, gender (both numbers and percentages) at the National, State/Territory and Federal Electoral Division levels.

Securing survey responses

Survey forms were returned through Australia Post's Priority mail service directly to each of the five scanning sites. At each site, survey forms were protected throughout the various stages of handling (including storage, opening the mail and extracting the forms, scanning and ultimately destruction) by 24/7 security guards. No unauthorised access was attempted.

Once the forms were scanned, the images and coded responses were stored in encrypted files. The ABS securely and separately held the keys to decrypt these files. The ABS worked with relevant government security advisors to implement high quality data protection measures to ensure the privacy and integrity of the data was maintained.

All survey forms, both physical and digital, will be securely destroyed within 60 days of the release of results.

Privacy Policy

PRIVACY POLICY

Purpose of this Privacy Policy

Authority and purposes for collecting and using your personal information

The Marriage Survey is not compulsory

Personal information that the ABS will collect

What do the barcodes on the survey material mean?

Who else will see my information?

Confidentiality

Security, retention and destruction of personal information

How about silent electors and members of the ADF and AFP who are registered with the AEC as deployed overseas?

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Purpose of this Privacy Policy

This privacy policy details how the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will treat any personal information that it collects as part of the voluntary Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (the Marriage Survey).

As required, it also outlines what personal information we will collect and how we will use it.

Authority and purposes for collecting and using your personal information

Protecting your privacy and confidentiality is critical to the ABS. As an Australian Government agency, we comply with our obligations under the *Privacy Act 1988* (Privacy Act) and manage personal information in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles.

The ABS is undertaking the Marriage Survey in accordance with the *Census and Statistics (Statistical Information) Direction 2017* (the Direction) issued by the Treasurer on 9 August 2017 (and amended on 17 August 2017), and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (Census and Statistics Act).

The Marriage Survey is not compulsory

Participation in the Marriage Survey is voluntary. If a person does not wish to participate then no action is required. The Australian Statistician will not make any compulsory requests for individuals to complete the Marriage Survey, and no penalties will apply if individuals decide not to participate in the Marriage Survey.

Personal information that the ABS will collect

In order to conduct the Marriage Survey, the ABS will collect two key sets of personal information:

- Commonwealth Electoral Roll information for all Australians who are 'electors' within the meaning of the Direction¹, comprising:
 - For registered silent electors, and members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Australian Federal Police (AFP) who are registered with the AEC as deployed overseas - elector reference number and electoral division (however, these details are not considered to be personal information); and
 - For all other electors - elector reference number, name, address, gender, electoral division and date of birth.
- Completed survey responses from eligible Australians who choose to participate, comprising a response to whether or not the law should be changed to allow same sex couples to marry.

Information from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll is provided to the ABS by the AEC in accordance with the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*. The ABS will collect, use and disclose this information only in accordance with the Privacy Act, the Direction and the Census and Statistics Act.

This information will ensure that every eligible Australian has the opportunity to participate in the Marriage Survey by allowing the survey materials to be addressed to each elector at their address listed on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll, and primarily delivered by mail.

Completed survey responses will be received by the ABS via paper, telephone and online options.

Once processed, information will be stored in two files:

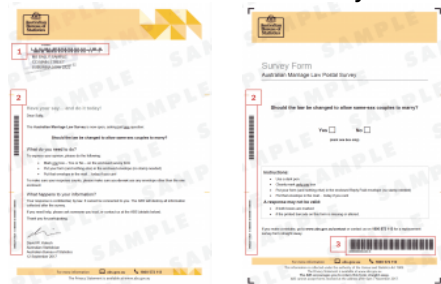
- A file containing only your electoral division and response to whether the law should be changed to allow same sex couples to marry.
- A file containing only the unique codes of survey respondents, which will be used to ensure that only one response is received for each eligible Australian and to calculate the proportion of people who have responded.

Personal details will never be seen or stored alongside the answer to the survey question.

Under certain circumstances, information to confirm your identity may be collected where you seek to access or correct the information the ABS or AEC holds about you, or request a new survey form or access code.

¹ Electors within the meaning of the Direction consist of all persons registered on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll as at midnight 24 August 2017 who are aged 18 years or older as at 24 August 2017 and who are not serving a sentence of imprisonment of 3 years or longer

What do the barcodes on the survey material mean?



1. Barcode above address (located on the instruction letter):

The barcode shown above the name and address on the instruction letter is an Australia Post generated code. This code represents the Delivery Point Identification (DPID) which is a randomly generated, unique 8-digit number used by Australia Post to identify street addresses. This barcode is not used, or useable, for any other purpose.

2. Code along the left hand side of the materials:

The 'sequence number' located along the left hand side of the materials is simply a sequence of numbers, that do not contain any personal information, used as part of the printing and envelope insertion process. This allows the printer to identify a piece of paper in the event of a spoiled page or error during the print and envelope insertion process. If a form or instruction letter needs to be regenerated, this barcode allows the simple identification of what needs to be reprinted and is a critical process control component within the quality controls. The 'sequence number' also enables the insertion machine to identify and group together the correct instruction letter and survey form to be put in an individual envelope for each eligible Australian, resulting in a very efficient and automated process. This 'sequence number' is not used, or useable, for any other purpose.

3. Form ID (located on the survey form):

The barcode (or Form ID) on the survey form is used to link a specific form to an eligible Australian. It will be used for "mark-in" purposes only and is a single-use, anonymous code. No person who sees or has any access to any completed forms will know both the name of eligible Australians and the related single-use code.

As can be seen in the sample materials, the Form ID appears on the survey form, which has no other identifying information (such as a name or address) while the instruction letter only includes the name and address of the recipient and not the Form ID. This ensures that anyone with access to a completed survey form is unable to identify the respondent.

It is important that you do not include the instruction letter, or any other material that contains personal information, in the envelope with your survey response. This will ensure the anonymity of your survey response.

Who else will see my information?

The ABS has contracted certain service providers to support mail-out, collection and call centre operations of the Marriage Survey. The ABS may provide your personal information to these organisations, including name and address, if it is necessary in order for the contracted service provider to complete its work.

Contracted service providers will also receive your anonymous survey response, including via paperless options, and provide it to the ABS. Your personal information will continue to be protected in accordance with the Privacy Act at all times, and the contracted service providers are contractually bound to use this information for a specific purpose only and must destroy the information once the contracted work has been completed. The contracted service providers are also bound by confidentiality obligations to ensure that your personal information remains confidential.

Any organisations engaged by the ABS or the AEC (including any sub-contracted organisations) will only use Australian-based sites, and at no time will your personal information be disclosed to an overseas recipient.

Confidentiality

The ABS has taken a number of precautions in connection with the Marriage Survey to ensure that your personal information remains confidential. This includes using a unique code to ensure that no one can associate you with your survey response. A unique code will be applied to each survey form and paperless response so that survey responses can be validated by the ABS as being genuine, while also ensuring that each response does not identify a particular person.

As soon as is practicable, the ABS will separate the unique code from your survey response, which cannot be re-identified after that time.

The personal information that the ABS collects from you is covered by the secrecy provisions of the Census and Statistics Act. These provisions legally bind all ABS staff (including temporary employees) to protect your information.

The ABS will not disclose your personal information in a way that will enable you, or any other person, to be identified, except where an

organisation providing a contracted service requires the information to provide its service. However, any other organisations, including government departments and direct marketing companies, cannot have access to personal information you provide in the Marriage Survey.

It is an offence for any past or present ABS officer to divulge, either directly or indirectly, any information collected under the Census and Statistics Act. The Act provides for heavy penalties (fines of up to \$25,200 or imprisonment for up to 2 years or both) for anybody convicted of breaching this obligation.

Security, retention and destruction of personal information

All personal information collected by the ABS is collected and stored securely. Electronic and paper records containing your personal information are protected in accordance with the Australian Government Protective Security Policy Framework. The ABS manages your personal information in accordance with the Australian Government records management regime.

All information from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll, survey forms, images of survey forms, unique form codes and other information collected to confirm your identity, will be destroyed as soon as the work it is required for has been completed and will not be used for any other purpose outside of the Marriage Survey. This information will be destroyed no later than 60 days after the scheduled release of the survey results.

An exception to this destruction regime may apply where the information forms a body of evidence that may support the ABS in pursuing penalties against individuals for unlawful activities including, but not limited to, fraud. The ABS will destroy all information in accordance with the Administrative Functions Disposal Authority and the relevant records authority (2001/00000540).

The ABS has established rigorous, independent third party assurances in addition to internal assurance processes to establish that all handling of personal information meets the requirements set out in this policy.

How about silent electors and members of the ADF and AFP who are registered with the AEC as deployed overseas?

The AEC and ABS have taken care to protect the privacy of silent electors, and members of the ADF and AFP who are registered with the AEC as deployed overseas.

If you are a silent elector or a registered ADF or AFP member, the AEC will use the information it holds to send you a survey form on the ABS' behalf.

Like the forms of other eligible Australians, silent and registered ADF and AFP electors' survey responses will contain a unique code and no personal identification.

The unique code will allow the ABS to validate that it is a legitimate response and associate the response with your electoral division only. At no time will the ABS be provided with the name, address, gender or age of any silent elector or registered member of the ADF or AFP. For this reason, silent electors and registered ADF and AFP members will be excluded from gender and age statistics produced regarding survey participation rates.

If you are a silent elector, or a member of the ADF or AFP who is registered with the AEC as deployed overseas, and you wish to update your details for the purpose of receiving a survey form, you should contact the AEC Hotline on 02 6271 4441. You may be required to provide information to confirm your identity to access or correct the information that the AEC holds about you.

Consequences for you or your community if personal information is not collected

Information from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll is collected by the ABS to provide all eligible Australians the opportunity to participate in the Marriage Survey. If the information is not collected, the process for inviting Australians to participate could be, or could be perceived to be, inequitable, incomplete or otherwise compromised. This could diminish the robustness of the statistics produced.

Completed survey responses are collected to publish statistics on:

- a count of survey responses ('Yes', 'No' and 'Invalid') nationally as well as for each electoral division, state and territory; and
- a participation rate by age and gender nationally as well as for each electoral division, state and territory.

This information is essential to produce a quality and integrity statement for these published statistics.

Information to confirm your identity provides evidence that you are who you claim to be and is necessary to ensure that survey materials are only provided to the specific eligible Australian. If this information is not provided then the ABS may, at its discretion, decide not to action a request that you have made to us.

How to access personal information we hold about you and seek its correction

In accordance with the Privacy Act, the ABS may permit you to access or correct your personal information, where it is reasonable and practicable for the ABS to do so.

If you wish to update your details for the purpose of receiving a survey, you should contact the Information Line on 1800 572 113. You may be required to provide information to confirm your identity.

To request access to, or correction of, personal information collected in the Marriage Survey, contact the ABS Privacy Officer using the details provided below.

Please note that once the ABS has stored your survey response separate to your unique code, and destroyed the concordance which lists your identity and code, your response will not be identifiable and therefore the ABS will be unable to permit you to access or correct the information you have provided.

ABS websites

For further information about privacy and security of ABS websites and alternatives to our websites, see the ABS Privacy Policy section of the ABS website.

How to contact us

Our Privacy Officer will deal with your inquiries or complaints regarding privacy and can be contacted:

By email: privacy@abs.gov.au

By phone: 02 6252 7203

By post:

ABS Privacy Officer
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Locked Bag 10
Belconnen ACT 2617

How to make a privacy complaint

If you think we may have breached your privacy rights or our privacy responsibilities, a complaint should first be made to the ABS Privacy Officer using the details provided above. If you are not satisfied with how the ABS Privacy Officer handles your complaint, or the outcome reached, you may refer your complaint to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner.

Availability of this policy

If you wish to access this policy in an alternative format (e.g. hard copy), please contact the ABS Privacy Officer using the details provided above.

For information about how the ABS holds and uses personal information of employees, see the ABS Privacy Policy.

Independent Statement on privacy and the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey

"The ABS has taken a strong 'privacy by design' approach to protecting the privacy of Australians in designing the Survey. I am satisfied with the range of privacy measures that the ABS has embedded into the design of the Survey and supporting functions. I am also satisfied that the mitigation strategies and response plans are effective and appropriate in the context of the Survey."

Independent Statement on privacy and the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey

Malcolm Crompton AM, Managing Director, Information Integrity Solutions Pty Ltd; Privacy Commissioner of Australia 1999-2004

Online Enquiry Privacy Statement

The ABS takes every measure to maintain your privacy.

Use of Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey online enquiry forms is voluntary and will enable the ABS and its agents to respond to a range of enquiries, including some circumstances where your identity may need to be determined to provide a response.

If you wish to remain anonymous, please contact the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey Information Line on 1800 572 113. Please note that if your enquiry requires the ABS or its agents to access, confirm or update your details, or to respond to you directly, it may be necessary to verify your identity by collecting your name, address, date of birth, contact details, driver's licence or passport.

Personal information you provide on the enquiry form will be used to support the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey operations only. The information you provide on this form will be destroyed as soon as the work it is required for has been completed, unless it may form evidence identifying fraudulent activities, in which case the ABS will retain the information for as long as is necessary to conduct an investigation.

For more information on how the ABS manages personal information, including how to complain to the ABS or make a request to access or correct your information, please visit www.abs.gov.au/privacy.

Safeguards

MARRIAGE LAW POSTAL SURVEY SAFEGUARDS - AUTHORISATION REQUIREMENTS AND COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Overview

Authorisation requirements

What communications require authorisation

Exceptions

The authorisation particulars

Transitional issues

Obligations on broadcasters

Complaints about conduct in the marriage law survey

Complaints about authorisations

Complaints about broadcasters

Complaints about bribery

Complaints about threats

Complaints about vilification

Complaints about Interference and Discrimination

Complaints about misleading matter about completing the marriage survey

Complaints about ABS Officers influencing the survey responses

Overview

1. This page will be updated as needed to address common questions.

2. Legislative safeguards are in place to regulate the conduct of the current debate on whether the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry. This question is being put to Australian electors in the Marriage Law Postal Survey that is being conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

3. The *Marriage Law Survey (Additional Safeguards) Act 2017* (the Safeguards Act) commenced on 14 September 2017 to establish additional safeguards to existing protections. The additional safeguards operate until 15 November 2017. Communications about the marriage law survey matter made during this period must ensure that they are accompanied by certain particulars that are aimed to ensure that those making public comments about the marriage survey are identifiable and accountable for those comments.

4. This Guide provides a basic introduction to the authorisation requirements in the Safeguard Act and the avenues for complaining about communications or conduct during the marriage law survey. Individual matters are assessed on a case-by-case basis and, ultimately, it is for

the courts to decide upon the interpretation of the law in any particular case. Accordingly, if you are in doubt about the interpretation of the law in particular circumstances, you should seek your own independent legal advice.

5. The Safeguards Act ensures that the survey has a comprehensive suite of safeguards in place to allow the expression of free and informed views, to allow persons to hold and express views without being vilified and ensures the public communications are clearly authorised, so people know who is communicating with them, and to prevent undue influence through bribery, threats and misleading or deceptive publications. In summary, the Safeguards Act:

- promotes the expression of free and informed views in the statistical collection process by enhancing transparency, accountability and traceability around communications of marriage law survey matters;
- requires authorisations to be included on all forms of communication of marriage law survey matter, including printed material, voice call and text messages, and online communication of such matter;
- provides the Electoral Commissioner with information-gathering powers in relation to the authorisations requirements;
- applies broadcasting provisions from the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (the Broadcasting Services Act), the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* (the ABC Act) and the *Special Broadcasting Service Act 1991* (the SBS Act) requiring the broadcasters, where they broadcast marriage law survey matter expressing a view in relation to the survey to provide reasonable opportunities to any person or organisation holding an opposing view to broadcast material in relation to same-sex marriage and the survey process;
- sets out offences for bribery and threats, and makes clear that the Statistician and officers of the ABS are not to engage in conduct with the intention of influencing the content of a marriage law survey response provided to the Statistician;
- provides for civil penalties in relation to conduct such as vilification, interference or discrimination and misleading or deceptive publications relating to the completion of the marriage law survey; and
- provides injunctive relief in relation to the statistics collection process and related activity.

6. These safeguard complement a range of existing protections across different legislative frameworks that also protect the integrity of the survey process. For example there are:

- obligations, including privacy protections, on officials conducting the survey under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (the Census and Statistics Act), the *Public Service Act 1999* and the *Privacy Act 1988*; and
- mail and telecommunications offences in the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Criminal Code).

Authorisation requirements

What communications require authorisation

7. The Safeguards Act applies to a wide range of communications including all publicly broadcasted media. This includes television, radio, digital television and digital radio stations, printed material, voice calls (including robocalls) and text messaging (for example, bulk text messaging). It covers:

- all marriage law survey matter in the form of "paid for" advertisements;
- a broad range of marriage law survey matter in the form of promotional items, such as leaflets, flyer, posters and fridge magnets.
- a matter that is communicated by, or on behalf of, a person, that is intended to affect whether another person provides a marriage law survey response to the Statistician, or the content of such a response.

8. The term 'communicate' excludes two types of entities who merely carry or broadcast the communication: carriage service providers and broadcasters. This exclusion is for avoidance of any doubt, and reflects that in some capacity, broadcasters and carriage service providers are the medium through which another entity's matter is communicated. To the extent that broadcasters and carriage service providers merely represent the conduit by which the matter is communicated, and are not the author of the message, the authorisation obligations will not apply but rather will apply to the person who "paid for" the advertisement. This exemption for broadcasters reflects the possibility of live or near-live broadcasts where usual editorial controls may not be available before the content is publicly available. This is contrast to other media platforms, including print media, where there should be a sufficient opportunity to review content before it is published.

9. To remove the risk of any breach of the Safeguard Act the general advice is: "when in doubt - authorise the communication".

Exceptions

10. There are a number of exceptions to authorisation requirements for communications about the marriage law survey. These exceptions include:

- communications that form part of clothing or any other item that is intended to be worn on the body and items where the size or nature makes it impracticable to include a notification;
- communications that form part of the reporting of news, the presenting of current affairs or any editorial content in the news media;
- communications engaged in solely for genuine satirical, academic or artistic purposes;
- an opinion poll or research relating to the intentions of survey participants;
- a communication for personal purposes. This exception is intended to ensure that personal communications which are clearly not intended to be communicated more broadly do not require an authorisation. For example, a supporter of a politically active group calls a family member of his/her family or a friend and discusses marriage law survey matters with no intention that their views will be distributed more widely in a public setting;
- an internal communication of a notifying entity which is clearly not intended to be communicated publicly, such as internal consultation on a communications strategy;
- a communication at a meeting of two or more persons if the identity of the person (the 'speaker') communicating at the meeting, and any entity on whose behalf the speaker is communicating, can reasonably be identified by the person or persons to whom the speaker is speaking;
- a live communication of a meeting, but not any later communication of that meeting. This removes the authorisation requirements from live communications, such as live broadcasting, without exempting later communication such as delayed broadcasting; and
- a communication solely for the purpose of announcing a meeting.

The authorisations particulars

11. To ensure the accountability and traceability around communications of marriage law survey matters the Safeguards Act requires the following particulars to be included.

Written material

12. The particulars that the notifying entity must ensure are contained at the end of a communication.

13. Those particulars include:

- the name of the person or entity who approved the communication;
- where the person is an individual the full address suburb or locality at which the person can be contacted;
- where the entity has a principal office or business premises, the full street address, suburb or locality (including the relevant town or city); and
- on printed material the particulars must be in a font size that can be read by a person without the use of any visual aid.

Text messages and certain internet advertising (e.g. Facebook and Google Adwords)

14. The particulars that the notifying entity must ensure are contained either at the end of a communication or on a website that can be accessed by a URL that is identified in the communication.

15. The particulars must include:

- the name of the person who approved the communication;
- where the person is an individual the town or city in which the individual lives;
- where the person is not an individual, the name of the entity and the relevant town or city of the entity

16. Where the particulars are too long to be included in the text message or electronic advertisement, the text message or electronic advertisement must include a link by URL to a website where the required particulars can be found.

Social media

17. The Safeguards Act requires social media content during the limitation period to have an authorisation if the matter is a paid advertisement approved by a person or is communicated by, or on behalf of, a person and is intended to affect whether another person provides a survey response, or the content of their response.

18. Where the authorisation requirements apply to most social media content, then it will be sufficient for the matter to include the name of the individual and the town or city in which the individual lives, which may be readily apparent from a person's social media page. It is sufficient that most Facebook accounts identify the true name of the account owner and their city. The words "authorised by" do not need to be added to a post, rather it is the identity and location that are the requirements. Social media content (e.g. Facebook or Twitter) will not require an authorisation if it is communicated for personal purposes, for instance only to personal friends.

Telephone calls (including bulk voice calls)

19. The particulars that the notifying entity must ensure are contained at the beginning of the call.

20. Those particulars include:

- the name of the person who approved the communication;
- where the person is an individual the town or city in which the individual lives;
- where the person is not an individual, the name of the entity and the relevant town or city of the entity

Websites

21. It is not prescribed where an authorisation should appear on a website. But a website should include the following particulars:

- the name of the person who approved the communication;
- where the person is an individual the town or city in which the individual lives;
- where the person is not an individual, the name of the entity and the relevant town or city of the entity

Transitional issues

22. The offences and civil penalties in the Safeguards Act will only apply to the communication of marriage law survey matter that occurs from 14 September 2017 to 15 November 2017. Accordingly, material that has been communicated before 14 September 2017 does not require the inclusion of authorisation particulars. For example, in relation to social media content that existed before 14 September 2017 that is shared after this date, unless further sharing is paid for or its further communication is intended to affect another person's response to the marriage law survey.

Obligations on broadcasters

23. The Safeguard Act applies certain provisions in the Broadcasting Services Act, the ABC Act and the SBS Act regarding 'political matter' and 'political subject' to marriage law survey matter for the purpose of the survey during the limitation period. The obligations that fall to broadcasters under those Acts (which include obligations to publish certain particulars) continue to apply in an unaffected manner in relation to the marriage law survey matter. This includes obligations to broadcast certain particulars. It also ensures existing compliance, accountability and transparency requirements under the SBS Act and ABC Act will apply to these broadcasters' engagement with marriage law survey matter.

Complaints about conduct in the marriage law survey

Complaints about authorisations

24. Any inquiries or complaints about the authorisation particulars should be directed to the AEC at www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Contact_the_AEC/feedback.htm

Complaints about broadcasters

25. Any inquiries or complaints about the obligations placed on broadcasters should be directed to ACMA at acma.gov.au/theACMA/About/Corporate/Structure-and-contacts/contact-the-acma-acma-1

Complaints about bribery

26. The Safeguard Act provides that a person cannot ask for, receive or obtain, or give or confer, any property or benefit with the intention of influencing a person's decision as to whether to provide a response to the marriage law survey or the contents of such a response. There is a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units in relation to giving or receiving a bribe. The caselaw on the similar provision contained in section 326 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 is that the offence is directed at the giving or conferring or promising to a person of any property or benefit, by a person, with the direct intention of influencing or affecting the way a person votes by generating feelings of gratitude or obligation.

27. Any inquiries or complaints about possible bribery in persons responding to the marriage law survey should be directed to the AEC

at http://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Contact_the_AEC/feedback.htm

Complaints about threats

28. The Safeguard Act provides that a person commits an offence under this provision if they make a threat to an enrolled person to cause detriment, and they intend to influence or affect the enrolled person's decision whether to provide a marriage law survey response to the Statistician, or the content of such a response. There is a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units for contravention.

29. Any inquiries or complaints about possible threats in persons responding to the marriage law survey should be directed to the AEC at http://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Contact_the_AEC/feedback.htm

Complaints about vilification

30. The Safeguards Act provides that persons must not vilify, intimidate or threaten to cause harm because of any of the following grounds:

- that the other person or group expresses or holds a view in relation to the marriage law survey question;
- that the first person believes that the other person or persons hold a view in relation to the marriage law survey question; or
- the religious conviction, sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status of the other person or persons.

31. There is a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units for contravention.

32. A person affected by possible vilification can seek the support of a notifying entity to seek the approval and consent of the Attorney-General to commence an action in the Federal Court. If you are an agent, officer or a member of a notifying entity and wish to seek the Attorney-General's approval and consent to commence civil proceedings in relation to vilification, inquiries can be made to surveysafeguards@ag.gov.au.

Complaints about Interference and Discrimination

33. The Safeguards Act provides that a person must not engage in conduct that hinders or interferes with any person in providing a marriage law survey response or discriminates against another person because the other person made a donation to a notifying entity. There is a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units for contravention.

34. A person affected by such interference or discrimination can seek the support of a notifying entity to seek the approval and consent of the Attorney-General to commence an action in the Federal Court. If you are an agent, officer or a member of a notifying entity and wish to seek the Attorney-General's consent to commence civil proceedings in relation to interference with survey responses and discrimination, inquiries can be made to surveysafeguards@ag.gov.au.

Complaints about misleading matter about completing the marriage survey

35. The Safeguards Act provides that a person must not print, publish or distribute, or cause, permit or authorise to be printed, published or distributed, any matter or thing that is likely to mislead or deceive an enrolled person in relation to responding to the marriage law survey. There is a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units in relation to misleading or deceptive publications.

36. The intention of this provision is not to ensure that matter that is printed, published or distributed around the general subject matter of the survey is truthful or correct, but rather to address where misleading or deceptive information is provided about how to complete or return a valid marriage law survey response, consistent with the elector's intention. The Electoral Commissioner or any delegates of the Electoral Commissioner will not regulate any political content of advertising. The Electoral Commissioner's role will be to ensure that publications do not mislead or deceive enrolled persons about the way in which they respond to the survey, and more specifically, how the survey form is marked. For example, publications should not advocate a way of responding to the survey that is not provided for on the survey form or instructions. This includes marking the survey form in such a way that would result in the response not being counted.

37. Any inquiries or complaints about possible misleading material about how to complete the marriage law survey should be directed to the AEC at http://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Contact_the_AEC/feedback.htm

Complaints about ABS Officers influencing survey responses

38. The Safeguards Act provides that the Statistician or an officer of the ABS commits an offence if they engage in conduct with the intention of influencing the content of a marriage law survey response provided to the Statistician. The offence is limited to those circumstances where the Statistician or officer is exercising powers or performing duties in relation to the marriage law survey. There is a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units for contravention.

39. This provision will assist in ensuring the impartiality of relevant officers. It supplements other limitations and obligations placed on the Statistician and officers of the ABS under the Public Service Act 1999, the ABS Act, the Census and Statistics Act and OECD Best Practice

40. Any inquiries or complaints about a possible breach of this requirement should be directed to the ABS at our [Contact](#) page.

Key dates

KEY DATES

Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey

13-25 SEP	25 SEP-20 OCT	27 OCT
Look out for your survey and do it today	Requests for replacement forms	Post your survey back – time's running out

For more information:

marriagesurvey.abs.gov.au

1800 572 113

Thursday, 24 August 2017 (midnight local time) - The Commonwealth Electoral Roll closed for new enrolments or changes to enrolments for this survey.

Tuesday, 12 September 2017 - Mailing of forms and collection begins.

Monday, 25 September 2017 - All survey packages (which have a staggered delivery schedule) should be received by this date. Telephone and online response options open for people who cannot complete the paper survey. Survey forms are available for collection in capital city and regional locations.

Friday, 20 October 2017 (6pm local time) - Final day to request or pick up replacement survey forms, or to request a Secure Access Code to access telephone and online response options.

Friday, 27 October 2017 - Please mail your form back to the ABS by this date to make sure it counts.

Tuesday, 7 November 2017 (6pm local time) - [The survey closes](#). If your survey is received after this, it will not be counted.

Wednesday, 15 November 2017 (10am AEDT) - Survey results will be announced and published on this website. The Australian Statistician will publish a statement on the quality and integrity of the survey.

Your Postal Survey

YOUR POSTAL SURVEY

Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey
 Your survey materials
 How to complete your survey
 When a response is deemed invalid
 Returning your survey form
 How to find your nearest Post Office or Red Post Box
 Requesting a replacement form
 Were you moving or travelling during the survey period?

Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey

The Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey is now closed. Thank you to everyone who participated.

You could participate in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey if you were enrolled on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll, or made a legitimate application for enrolment, by 24 August 2017 and were eligible to vote in a federal election as at 24 August 2017.

An Australian Marriage Law Survey form or Secure Access Code was sent by post to every eligible Australian. It was sent to your address on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll.

Survey materials were mailed in a staggered delivery schedule over a two week period from 12 September 2017. You should have received your survey by 25 September 2017.

Requests for replacement materials opened on 25 September and closed on 20 October 2017.

Participation in the survey was voluntary. If you chose not to participate, you were encouraged to destroy the materials provided.

Each eligible Australian was responsible for completing their own survey. The ABS encouraged Australians to seek help from **someone they trust** if they needed help to complete their survey.

Your survey materials

The package containing the survey form included a Reply Paid envelope and instructions on how to complete the survey.

The Reply Paid envelope was for your survey response only and not for correspondence, complaints or other communication. Any extraneous

material inserted in the envelope with the survey will be destroyed. This could also contaminate processing machinery or result in the survey also being destroyed and not processed.



AMLPS_survey_form.pdf



AMLPS_survey_envelope.pdf

How to complete your survey

The survey asked just one question: "Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?".

Instructions included the following:

- Mark one box – Yes or No – on the survey form.
- Use a dark pen.
- Put your form (and nothing else) in the enclosed Reply Paid envelope.
- Put that envelope in the mail (no stamp needed)... straight away, if you can!



AMLPS_survey_markings.pdf

When a response is deemed invalid

A response may not be valid if:

- Both boxes are marked.
- The printed barcode on the form is missing or altered.

Returning your survey form

Only one survey response was accepted for each eligible Australian.

To ensure your response counts, the ABS strongly encouraged you to post your completed survey to the ABS straight away.

The ABS cannot accept surveys received at the address after 6pm (local time) on 7 November 2017.

How to find your nearest Post Office or Red Post Box

To help you locate your nearest Post Office or Red Post Box, you could enter your suburb, city or postcode into Australia Post's Locator.

Requesting a replacement survey form

Requests for replacement materials opened on 25 September and closed on 20 October 2017.

Were you moving or travelling during the survey period?

If you weren't at your enrolled address during the survey period, you could arrange to have your mail forwarded or ask a trusted person to complete it on your behalf.

Inclusive strategies

INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES

The following inclusive strategies were implemented to ensure all eligible Australians could participate in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey:

Who is a trusted person?



Who is a trusted person.docx

Pick-up and Drop-off Locations



Drop-off Locations.docx

Rural & Remote Australians



Australians living in rural and remote areas.docx

Remote Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples



Remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.docx



aboriginal_and_torres_strait_islander_peoples_factsheet.pdf

Australians overseas



Australians overseas.docx



australians_overseas_factsheet.pdf

People with a disability



People with a disability.docx

People from multicultural backgrounds



People from multicultural backgrounds.docx

People experiencing homelessness



People experiencing homelessness.docx

People in aged care facilities



People in aged care facilities.docx

Silent electors



Silent electors.docx

Report on the conduct of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey

This report details the processes designed and implemented by the ABS to conduct the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey. It covers the context within which the survey operated, key features, planning and design, collection process, service channels, inclusive strategies, communication campaign, processing of responses, quality assurance, costs and evaluation.



700652_ABS_AMLPS_A4_Report_Conduct_0118_FA4.pdf

News and Media

15 NOVEMBER 2017 - AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN SPEECH



Australian Statistician announcement of results.docx

MEDIA RELEASES

November 2017

15 November 2017 - Australia supports changing the law to allow same-sex couples to marry

13 November 2017 - Announcement of Marriage Law Postal Survey Results

6 November 2017 - It's now or never: last chance to have your say

October 2017

25 October 2017 - Millions of Australians have their say

19 October 2017 - Last days to get a Marriage Law Postal Survey

16 October 2017 - Act now to have your say in the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey

11 October 2017 - Time fast running out to get a replacement Marriage Law Postal Survey

5 October 2017 - Australians overseas have their say in Marriage Law Postal Survey

5 October 2017 - Supporting people with illness, disabilities and injury participate in Marriage Survey

September 2017

28 September 2017 - ABS to publish weekly estimate of Marriage Law Postal Surveys received

25 September 2017 - Have you received your Marriage Law Postal Survey?

22 September 2017 - ABS announces Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey capital city and regional pick-up locations

22 September 2017 - ABS plans 200 remote community visits to help Indigenous participation in Marriage Law Postal Survey

19 September 2017 - ABS - Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey mail-out on track

16 September 2017 - ABS - Reported incident with survey form barcode

13 September 2017 - ABS - Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey materials are on their way!

August 2017

30 August 2017 - AEC - Enrolment processing for the marriage survey completed

22 August 2017 - ABS - Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey: Don't delay, enrol today!

Campaign

CAMPAIGN

Introduction

To make sure all eligible Australians were aware of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey and had the opportunity to participate, the ABS conducted a mass media-led campaign, to inform the public about the collection process, including when and how to participate, the voluntary nature of the survey and to remind people when the survey is closing.

The campaign included television, radio, print and digital advertisements and was rolled out from 11 August to 3 November 2017, in the following three phases:

Phase 1 - Enrolment: To encourage all eligible voters to enrol or check that their enrolment details are up to date on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll

Phase 2 - Survey Period: To raise awareness survey materials will be sent to all eligible electors on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll – look out for your letter/envelope, complete it and mail it back straight away

Phase 3 - Reminder: To raise awareness the survey is closing soon. Have your say.

PHASE 1 CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Television

Phase one television ad (external link to YouTube)

Print



AMLPS_Phase1_Print.jpg

PHASE 2 CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Television

Phase 2 television ad (external link to YouTube)

Print



- AMLPS_Phase2_Print_Ad_1.pdf



- AMLPS_Phase2_Print_Ad_2.pdf

Posters



- AMLPS_POSTER_A4_1.pdf



- AMLPS_POSTER_A4_2.pdf



- AMLPS_POSTER_A4_3.pdf



- AMLPS_POSTER_A4_4.pdf



- AMLPS_POSTER_A4_5.pdf



- AMLPS_POSTER_A4_6.pdf



- AMLPS_POSTER_A4_7.pdf

PHASE 3 CAMPAIGN MATERIALS - REQUEST REPLACEMENT MATERIALS

Television

Phase 3, part 1 television ad (external link to YouTube)

Print



AMLPS_Phase3_Print_Ad_1.pdf

PHASE 3 CAMPAIGN MATERIALS - CLOSING SOON

Television

Phase 3, part 2 television ad (external link to YouTube)

Print



AMLPS_Phase3_Print_Ad_2.pdf

In-Language Materials

Translated print, radio and digital campaign materials were produced in the following languages:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 - Anindilyakwa language
 - Arrente language
 - Burarra language
 - Kimberley Kriol language
 - Murrinh Patha language
 - Northern Kriol language
 - Pintupi Luritja language
 - Pitjantjatjara language
 - Tiwi language
 - TSI Kriol language
 - Warlpiri language
 - Yolngu-matha language
 - Yumpla Tok language
- Arabic
- Assyrian
- Bosnian
- Burmese
- Chinese
- Croatian
- Dari
- English
- English (Subcontinental accent)
- Farsi
- Filipino
- Greek
- Italian
- Khmer
- Korean
- Lao
- Macedonian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Serbian Cyrillic
- Serbian Latin
- Sinhalese
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Vietnamese

CAMPAIGN CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

As outlined in the Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns by Australian Government Departments and Agencies (March 2010),

agency Chief Executives are required to certify that a campaign complies with the Guidelines and relevant government policies.

The Chief Executive's certification statements are published online after the campaigns have launched.



- Phase one certification statement.pdf



- Phase two certification statement.pdf



- Phase three certification statement.pdf

Using ABS survey materials

GUIDANCE AND CONDITIONS OF USE OF ABS SURVEY MATERIALS IN CAMPAIGNS

Requests for the use of Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey materials in third party campaigns should be submitted to the ABS. The provision or use of ABS materials for campaign purposes does not imply and cannot be presented in any way as any endorsement by the ABS of that campaign.

Survey materials must not be altered or adjusted in any way (i.e. do not make the Yes or No words or box sizes bigger, change colours, add words or additional instructions, etc.).

The ABS logo on materials should not be shown or appear in campaign material and must be obscured (i.e. hidden by thumb, hand, other material like mail, etc.).

The addressee's details (name and address) and any barcodes on the materials should be obscured/pixelated and not clearly shown.

When showing the survey form:

- only show a person using a dark pen (preferably black) and definitely not glitter or other extraneous material
- only ONE box must be marked
- the one box chosen to be marked can be marked in any way (i.e. tick, cross, colouring in, line through, etc.)
- do not show the bottom of the form in close up or detail - specifically from the point: A response may be not be valid and the instructional information on the bottom of the form.

When talking about return of the surveys forms, please urge participants to return their form straight away.

The files must only be provided to those who require them to create the advertising and cannot be distributed to others by email or other means. Third party suppliers used in the production of campaign advertising and materials must also abide by these conditions of use.

The final advertising materials with a contact name and number must be provided to the ABS prior to Commercial Advice (CAD) approval (TVC) and lodgement (for other mediums).

Requests for the use of survey materials in campaigns can be submitted to media@abs.gov.au

About this Release

This publication presents the results from the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey which was conducted under the Census and Statistics Act 1905. The survey asked one question: should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?

The publication provides details about the survey, as well as the results and participation rates at a national, state and Federal Electoral Division level.

History of Changes

28/06/2018 - On 28 June 2018, minor formatting was made on the report on the conduct of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

30/01/2018 - On 30 January 2018, a report on the conduct of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey was released.

Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey Results (Media Release)

MEDIA RELEASE

15 November 2017

Australia supports changing the law to allow same-sex couples to marry

All states and territories recorded a majority Yes response. Of the 150 Federal Electoral Divisions, 133 recorded a majority Yes response, and 17 Federal Electoral Divisions recorded a majority No response.

12,727,920 million people participated in the voluntary survey – representing 79.5 per cent of the more than 16 million eligible Australians.

Releasing the results, Australian Statistician, David W. Kalisch, said the participation rate was high for a voluntary survey.

"This high response rate far exceeds expectations and compares extremely favourably with other voluntary exercises conducted around the

world thanks to the strong interest and engagement of eligible Australians in this topic," he said.

The ABS had rigorous methods to avoid fraud, manage risks and protect the integrity and privacy of all responses.

"Independent assurers checked our approach and actions along the way, and external observers reviewed our coding processes," he said.

"This combined with our efforts to ensure only one response was counted per eligible Australian, means Australians can have confidence these statistics reflect the country's views."

The detailed results published for national, states and territories and Federal Electoral Divisions are accompanied by a statement on the quality and integrity of the results.

"We're grateful almost all respondents complied with the survey instructions and this enabled extremely accurate response coding, allowing us to quickly produce these results and complete all the requirements of the Treasurer's Direction," he said.

Mr Kalisch acknowledged the large number of agencies across Government and the private sector, including the Australian Electoral Commission, the Department of Human Services and Australia Post, that assisted the ABS to undertake this survey.

"With their help, the ABS conducted this survey to the standard expected by the community, and to meet the requirements of the Legal Direction from the Treasurer.

"In addition, while costs are still being tallied, the ABS is confident the final cost for the survey will be under \$100 million, many million dollars less than the available budget," he said.

The official statistics, including a count of responses (Yes, No and Response Not Clear) by Federal Electoral Division, State/Territory and National, are available from www.marriagesurvey.abs.gov.au/results

Key results

Region	Yes	No	Total	Participation rate
Australia	61.6%	38.4%	100%	79.5%
New South Wales	57.8%	42.2%	100%	79.5%
Victoria	64.9%	35.1%	100%	81.7%
Queensland	60.7%	39.3%	100%	77.9%
South Australia	62.5%	37.5%	100%	79.7%
Western Australia	63.7%	36.3%	100%	78.4%
Tasmania	63.6%	36.4%	100%	79.7%
Northern Territory(a)	60.6%	39.4%	100%	58.4%
Australian Capital Territory(b)	74.0%	26.0%	100%	82.4%

(a) Includes Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (within the Division of Lingiari).

(b) Includes Jervis Bay (within the Division of Fenner) and Norfolk Island (within the Division of Canberra).

Federal Electoral Divisions by majority results

Range of response result	Number of Divisions	
	Yes	No
50 to less than 60%	38	11
60 to less than 70%	67	5
70 to less than 80%	24	1
80 to less than 90%	4	0
Total	133	17

Federal Electoral Divisions by participation

Participation range	Number of Divisions
50 to less than 60%	1

60 to less than 70%	3
70 to less than 80%	70
80 to less than 90%	76
Total	150

Further information at the Federal Electoral Division level is available at www.marriagesurvey.abs.gov.au/results

Explanatory Notes

Glossary

GLOSSARY

AEC - Australian Electoral Commission

Age - Age is calculated as at 24 August 2017 using the date of birth on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll.

AMLPS - Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey

Direction - The *Census and Statistics (Statistical Information) Direction 2017* issued by the Treasurer on 9 August 2017.

Eligible participants - Eligible participants are those enrolled on the Commonwealth Electoral Roll, or those who made a legitimate application for enrolment, by midnight on 24 August 2017 and were eligible to vote in a federal election as at 24 August 2017.

External Observers - Suitable people nominated by two parliamentary committees that reviewed and provided assurance to the mark recognition process conducted during survey processing.

Gender - The gender of eligible participants was taken from the Commonwealth Electoral Roll as at 24 August 2017.

Not further defined - Not further defined is used for records that do not fit in the other categories. This includes (but is not limited to) silent electors and Defence Force personnel deployed overseas whose age and gender were not provided to the ABS.

Participation - Participating in the survey means returning a survey response on a paper form, the online form or on the telephone. In some cases the response was unclear and therefore did not contribute to the yes/no outcome.

Response - The responses were 'Yes' or 'No' as well as 'Response not clear' where the intended response was not able to be determined.

Response clear - A clear response is recorded where the markings on the form can be clearly identified as indicating yes or no to the survey question.

Response not clear - Responses where there is not a clear 'Yes' or 'No' recorded. This includes (but is not limited to) forms where both boxes have been ticked, where there are no marks on the form (blank response) or where the question has been changed to make the answer unclear.

SAC - Secure Access Code - Used for online and phone survey participation. These codes were allocated by an automated process through requests on the Online Enquiry Form or by contact centre staff.

Silent Electors - Electors who have their address suppressed on the electoral roll.

State/Territory - The state and territory totals in the Australia Marriage Law Postal Survey are derived from the total number of responses/eligible electors within each Federal Electoral Division assigned to that state or territory. Federal Electoral Divisions do not cross State and Territory borders. Note that Jervis Bay Territory is included in the Australian Capital Territory Division of Fenner, the Territory of Norfolk Island is included in the Australian Capital Territory Division of Canberra and the Territories of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands are included in the Northern Territory Division of Lingiari.

Trusted Person - If a person could not access their survey form, or complete their survey form independently, they could authorise another person they trust to assist them with the survey, or to complete the survey form on their behalf. A person could not self-declare themselves to be a trusted person for someone else.